INTELLIGENT LISTENING TO MUSIC

A GUIDE TO ENJOYMENT AND APPRECIATION FOR ALL LOVERS OF MUSIC

BY

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"SO THIS IS MUSIC!"

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PREFACE

Music, as most of us know, is a threefold art, existing only where there are composers, performers, and listeners. This is a book for listeners—both for those who depend solely upon broadcasting and the gramophone for its music, and the more fortunate minority who hear music at the source, namely, in the concert-hall.

The arts of composition and performance have been taught from times immemorial, but the art of listening is a comparatively recent educational innovation dating back only to the years immediately preceding the Great War. The work of Stewart Macpherson, Percy Scholes, and Sir Walford Davies will be long remembered, but the listening public has increased by millions since they began owing to the enormous distribution of what is vulgarly termed "potted" music.

Here, then, is a new guide to the true enjoyment and appreciation of music, intended primarily for those whose interest in the art has been aroused more recently by mechanical agencies. If it is thought that some of the information herein is itself "potted," it should be remembered that the hints and exercises appended to each chapter are from some points of view more valuable than the text leading up to them. For this book cannot of itself create new listeners: at most it can state principles and suggest methods by which intelligent listening may be cultivated. After all, the perfect listener is he who *assimilates* the right knowledge, *participates* by playing some kind of instrument, and *recreates* either mentally or on paper: he is listener, performer, and composer all in one, and therefore a true musician.

Beginners should attempt to cultivate only one type of

listening at a time, for listening, if effective, is as clear and logical as thinking. And not until the reader deserves the title of Intelligent Listener should he dare to assume the role of Critic.

My thanks are due to the following for generous assistance—

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W. W. J.

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1934

NOTE TO THE SECOND AND THIRD EDITIONS

I AM indebted to my many critics, reviewers, and personal friends for valuable suggestions which have enabled me to bring the present edition up to date. I also thank H.M.V. for revising the list of gramophone records. With the deletion of certain parts of the original work, and the substitution of others, together with the addition of a much more comprehensive index, I feel the book may now prove even more useful to those in search of a guide to listening.

W. W. J.

CONTENTS

Hold this sea-shell to your ear,
    And you shall hear,
Not the andante of the sea,
Not the wild wind's symphony,
But your own heart's minstrelsy.

You do poets and their song
    A grievous wrong
If your own heart does not bring
To their deep imagining
As much beauty as they sing.

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH

INTRODUCTION

The electrical and mechanical transmission and reproduction of sound is, without doubt, one of the greatest inventions of the present age. That a concert given before a small audience in London may be heard in the uttermost parts of the earth is nothing short of a miracle. Such a phenomenon would have been beyond our wildest dreams a few years ago, but in the interim conditions have developed so rapidly that, unless we pause for reflection, we scarcely realize the full extent of the change. We must not lose sight of the fact, however, that during the last 200 years the art of music has gradually been passing from the hands of the aristocracy into the reach of the whole civilized community. The movement received a sudden impetus with the advent of broadcasting, the gramophone, automatic piano, and sound film in the years immediately following the Great War. To-day it is no exaggeration to say that for the first time in history the vast realm of musical literature lies entirely at our doors, and that we are inundated wherever we go with what now amounts to a serious *glut*. At restaurants, theatres, cinemas, dwelling-houses, in the streets, parks, and market-places, on the river, at sea, and even in the air and the motor-car—excuse is made for musical interludes from which no escape seems possible. Seldom do we consider whether we are having more than enough. To know how much is good for us, what is best, and how to get the best out of it is indeed puzzling. In general we hear too much music half-heartedly, instead of a little really well. And, as for becoming so familiar with the masterworks that they indelibly fix themselves in our

memories to form part of our permanent possessions, such practice is, alas, all too rare. Yet the messages of the great composers await us if we care to seek them out. Lecture-recitals, broadcast talks, and books on musical appreciation are valuable aids, *but a true understanding of the art seldom develops until we have cultivated attentive and well-directed listening over a long period of time.*

INTELLIGENT LISTENING TO MUSIC

CHAPTER I

ON LISTENING TO MUSIC

We all have ears to hear, and, providing we are not suffering from some physical defect of the aural apparatus, each one of us has the same chance of receiving the manifold sound vibrations of the outer world. By far the greater number of impressions transferred from this outer world through the ear to the aural centres of the brain are *vocal*, since they consist of the verbal communications of fellow-beings. We listen to them, understand them, and shape our actions accordingly. On occasion we meet people whose language is strange and unintelligible, and, though we strain ears and minds to catch their meaning, we are at a loss to appreciate what they are saying: even if we hear each syllable distinctly, we may not be *listening*, because listening implies hearing plus comprehension. In a similar way, our eyes—which are merely two lenses set in our foreheads—receive images of everything that comes within vision, but the very number and variety of impressions are so great that rarely are we aware of all that lies before us. In fact, we are more often *seeing* than observing, for observation means seeing and perceiving.

True Appreciation.

The eye and ear are receiving agents for varying types and qualities of impressions, not excluding those exalted forms of beauty generally known as the Arts. Here,

again, our reception may be active (as in observing and listening), or passive (as in seeing and hearing). The visual arts are sculpture, architecture, and painting; the aural arts are poetry and music; whereas drama is a combination of both. There are instances where the enjoyment of poetry and music increases when the eye is brought into play additionally, for if the ear fails to grasp the meaning written symbols may assist appreciation. Such appreciation is a high human experience, the result of personal reaction to the outer vibrations already mentioned. Unfortunately, it is not everyone's privilege to enjoy art (and especially music, with which we are chiefly concerned) in this way. There are some people whom music neither moves nor entertains, since to them it means little or nothing—in fact they are happier without it. Others are agreeably amused by it: they like it, but it does not enter fully into their lives because they do not sufficiently understand it. And there are others, deeply interested in the art, some of whom become wholly wrapped up in it, to whom it is something apart, something sacred and almost divine. It is unnecessary for anybody permanently to remain in any one of these groups. A person with a dislike for music may, by education, training, and experience, become intensely fond of it. Conversely, psychologists have shown that the opposite has occurred in a few remote instances. Of course, there are many cases where a musical education has not materially aided appreciation (at least, appreciation of the orderly progressions of sounds as such) because the surges of emotion have not so much been felt as *visualized*, or translated into mental images: such people (who probably form a majority—in European countries, at any rate) endow music with definite meaning, meaning which may be quite apart from any ideas the composer may have had

during the conception of his work. We are thus led to believe that of all people who hear music under any kind of circumstance, there are three very definite types, namely, overhearers, hearers, and intelligent listeners.

1. Overhearers.

These are the people who are usually ignorant of the art and craft of music, and who are, therefore, incapable of attending to its minutiae, but are nevertheless charmed in a vaguely sensuous way. They may go to concerts, but their minds are mainly occupied by other matters. They leave the radio on all day, but they hear little or nothing of any value. For them, music is a pleasant drug which does not seriously interfere with their normal existence.

2. Hearers.

These may or may not have been musically trained and educated. They hear music and are invariably absorbed by a superficially beautiful work as a whole, though not necessarily by its details. Intermittently they listen intelligently, being chiefly attracted by sheer strength of rhythm, loveliness of melody, and fascinating timbre: a charming voice, a well-played instrument, chords "rich as the eye of a peacock's tail, harmonic passages like sunset clouds"—these, and a hundred other attractions give them infinite pleasure. When music is badly played, or its idioms are beyond their comprehension, they may be equally thrilled or completely bored, but their straying thoughts sooner or later return to the music itself, only to be thrown off at tangents again and again, for a great deal of what they hear is too long for their sustained attention, and, like a child with its toys, their dissipated interests constantly move around for elements which give a maximum of delight.

3. Intelligent Listeners.

In all probability these have received (or given themselves) a musical education, such as fully equips them to take an interest in all the tones and their relationships to the extent of being too busy to visualize, because they follow each and every sound with sustained and undivided attention. They watch the rise and fall of melodies note by note, interval by interval; the broad rhythms, the measured time patterns, the piling up of sounds upon each other, the amount of emphasis at this point and that—to them these are components in a scheme they enjoy not only in part, but as a whole. They are aware of the speed of the music, the quality and sonority of tone, the orderly rotation of phrases, themes, and sections, and the changes of key. They regard music as an art pregnant with fascinating detail, such as permits them to hear a masterpiece over and over again with increasing interest.

Three Types of Sensation.

The foregoing may lead us to imagine that intelligent listeners are for ever at work at high pitch. But music does not continuously demand rapt attention or involve prolonged analytic and synthetic mental processes: listening would be too exhausting, and too great a tax on mind and memory. At times music is mainly sensuous, or emotional, or intellectual. One writer has said that we can listen with the feet, the heart, and the head. The three types of sensations are known to psychologists as *levels of consciousness*. The sensuous level, they say, barely affects us at all: it is much like the reaction of a person to (say) a delightful interior decoration as he enters a strange room, and neither thinks nor looks at his surroundings, being engaged perhaps in

conversation. True, the brightness and sweeping outlines play lightly upon his senses, but they affect him only in a vague manner. Should the decoration catch his eye and win his admiration by virtue of the wealth and harmony of its colour, the breadth of its design, and the aptness with which it tones with other furnishings, he may be affected emotionally, even though he can offer no explanation for the experience. This is the second level of consciousness, because it involves his feelings. The third and highest level, which is the special gift to man as distinct from animals, is reached in this instance only through a knowledge and true understanding of the art of furnishing. It assumes a conception of the foundations of beauty, it brings into play the critical faculty, it compels a re-creation of the work of art along the lines employed by the creator—a thrilling, uplifting experience. The decoration is examined and its larger schemes broken up into motifs, which are themselves studied in relation to each other; repetition, balance, symmetry, tonal values, and so on, are observed (if present) with a view to their artistic success, and the experience ends with a final (though perhaps unconscious) judgment upon the work as a whole.

This analogy of an observer applies equally to a musical listener. Certain compositions have their own particular methods of appeal: popular dance music tends to give sensuous delight—it is music of the feet; sentimental ballads are inclined to give emotional delight, since they touch the heart; and a great deal of more serious music by eminent composers stimulates mind and spirit—it appeals to the intellect and to the soul. Musical works with a threefold appeal are quite common. A symphony which consists of more than one movement may move us differently in each of its parts, whereas a homogeneous

piece such as Lambert's *The Rio Grande* displays dance rhythms, voluptuous tunes, and traditional musical "architecture" in a much smaller space. Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, although on a lower plane, bears a striking resemblance in this respect, while there are moments in Wagner's operas when the three levels of consciousness are aroused all at the same time.

The Approach to Music.

From the point of view of the would-be listener there are a number of reasons why music is a difficult subject with which to get in touch quickly and completely. To begin with, it is the most impalpable and ethereal of the arts, and is rarely representative of the material things of this world. Sculpture, painting, and literature are necessarily concerned with that which is tangible, while music, together with architecture and abstract design, are definitely non-representative, for the artist attempts to express his inner self, and not the world outside. Further, music and literature are temporal arts, that is, they exist in time and not in space. Thus, we cannot hope to enjoy them unless we possess tolerably good memories. We may be interested in a great painting or a lovely statue whenever and wherever we like: it may win our attention continuously or intermittently, intensely or casually, objectively or subjectively, according to the strength of its appeal, the extent of our knowledge and familiarity with it, and the mood we may happen to be in at the time. In any case it is a reality, an *objet d'art* with shape and form which we may approach as the spirit moves us. But music is an art transitory and intangible. At no moment can we absorb completely a whole musical composition in the sense that we can take in a picture at a glance. If one square inch of a valuable

canvas were revealed to us every second, the enjoyment of a great painting would be a very tedious if not impossible process. In the first place, the examination would take time; secondly, our consecutive and combined impressions would have to be mentally knit together; and, finally, our visual memories would be so taxed by the jig-saw puzzle thus produced that they would reach breaking-point long before the end of the inspection. It is the fleeting nature of music that makes a complete conception of a work almost impossible on initial acquaintance. For all but skilled listeners an unfamiliar work should be heard at least three times, and in the case of more complicated compositions this number must of necessity be multiplied. A first hearing of a new piece of music is all-important for the reason that false impressions are difficult to counteract or eradicate at a later stage. The value of what is known as "immediate aesthetic feeling" cannot be over-estimated: theorizing, even in the case of hardened critics, is to be deprecated. A passive attitude, with little attention to detail, is, therefore, recommended in the preliminary survey. It is during the second hearing that the power of detailed observation (as well as the senses and the emotions) may be brought into play. Already the composer's message may have been partly grasped, but now is the opportunity for discovering *how* he delivers it. Some attention may profitably be given to the form of the work, as well as to the personal style of the author and the general treatment of his subject. Where the music is by a composer prone to speak in strange idioms, this second method of listening may need constant repetition. Eventually details may be forgotten, and the work may again be heard in a semi-passive way, a fuller meaning emerging as a result of the cumulative experiences and an increased

familiarity with the music as a whole. Beauty in art is of two types, the panoramic and the individual—massed beauty and detailed beauty: logically, we ought always to seek for general loveliness before particular loveliness.

The Need for Preliminary Training.

It is the second type of listening, which calls for intellectual exercise, that would-be music-lovers so often evade, not from indolence so much as from lack of knowledge and experience. Physical and emotional sensations are individual, and call for little explanation, while the flights of the spirit, which are again individual, are too indefinite to express clearly in words. Mental processes, on the other hand, need to be systematic, and they can and ought to be complex and manifold, for the deeper the knowledge and the contemplation, the richer the experience. An untrained listener in all probability knows something of the four basic fundamentals of music, namely rhythm, melody, harmony, and structure. He is aware that rhythm disciplines the movement of a composition, whether it be played by a single instrument or a full orchestra, and that the character of the rhythm decides the predominating emotion, whether it be sadness, despair, joy, contentment, or intense vigour. He is not so sure of the difference between rhythm and time, nor does he appreciate the value of occasional touches of arhythm. He also knows that melody is a moving line of sounds which, even more than rhythm, is capable of deeply expressive emotions, emotions which words cannot describe, but which are understood by all men irrespective of race or breeding. Again, he may not appreciate intervals, tonality, and symmetry of melody, nor understand the use of atonality and asymmetry in modern art. In harmony he knows we have a number

of simultaneous sounds, and that the several methods of combining them affect us in varying ways, so that some please the ear and others are pungent and disturbing. But his information on the growth and development of the many harmonic types is likely to be small. And he may also be aware that an artist has little hope of being understood if he fails to present his ideas in logical sequence, and that the devices of repetition, variety, balance, and so on, are essential, otherwise a work can never fully gratify its admirer. But the nicer points of structure, the difference for instance between artistic and mechanical balance, have probably never occurred to him.

The Requisites for Intelligent Listening.

These general bases of music, which are common to all arts, but in other forms, the would-be music-lover knows either consciously or unconsciously. His listening must rely on more detailed information, however, if it is to be intense and fruitful. It must, in fact, cover wide fields, else enjoyment of the masterpieces will be strictly limited. There are at least eight requisites of intelligent listening involved in the hearing of a new work: mental inquiries should be made on the following points—

1. Its nature. 2. Its style. 3. Its age.
4. The themes upon which it is founded.
5. The use made of these themes.
6. The patterns into which the music falls.
7. Tonal values.
8. The personality of the composer.

The Composition.

(1) At the outset we should know the nature of the composition, whether vocal, instrumental, or both. If vocal, it may be a folk song, ballad, art song (*Lied*), for one or more voices, with or without accompaniment.

It may be a large choral work, such as a cantata or oratorio; or an opera. If it is an instrumental work, it may be for one instrument, a small group, or a large combination, and of large or small proportions. All these points are usually quite easy to clear up; nevertheless they must be decided immediately, since the whole course of our subsequent action depends upon such elementary data. For listeners unacquainted with these simple musical classifications, there is no alternative but to learn them before hoping to proceed any further.

Its Style.

(2) Next, we should know something of the style of the author's work. Roughly speaking, music is either classical or non-classical, but this distinction is not enough for the discriminating listener. A classical work is said to be *absolute* when it is complete in itself, and independent of external ideas: as such it is generally regarded as the highest form of musical expression, since, by virtue of its insularity it epitomizes the ideal—"Art for art's sake." Non-classical music may include the romantic style, which charms by its poetry of sound achieved by loveliness of harmony and melody which persuades us to conjure up delightful visions of sunlit landscapes, murmuring forests, or burbling brooks; such imaginings are invariably set in motion by the title of the piece. The pictorial style—a branch of romanticism—actually suggests or portrays concrete ideas in narrative form: the composer takes it for granted that we have already become acquainted with his story, because he knows only too well that the most skilful arrangements of sounds cannot of themselves become substitutes for literary themes. Another branch of the romantic style is that of mere impressions: in this the composer tries to stimulate

fanciful images around the poetic title he gives the piece by enveloping us in a bath of shimmering sounds, apparently meaningless in themselves, but atmospheric and out of focus, as it were. Still another style, confined chiefly to modern works, is that of viewing personal experiences from entirely new angles, and transforming them into sounds, which may or may not assist us to see life through new spectacles. For the benefit of the reader, these styles of composition have been arranged in order of natural development.

Of course, a great deal of music of pre-classical times is performed to-day, and is of outstanding beauty and charm, but, in order even to begin to enjoy it, it is necessary to subject one's whole process of listening to re-orientation. The simpler kinds of composition of the present age are mainly *vertical* in type; that is, they have a melody moving over a harmonic accompaniment, the melody as a rule being predominant (and therefore easily heard), while the quieter underlying chords are merely "sensed" by the average listener. The superficial enjoyment of these pieces requires little effort. But music of the *horizontal* type calls for really concentrated listening even if it is to be enjoyed superficially, for it consists of melodies woven together, and to hear only the upper tune (as in vertical listening) is to miss the greater part of the composer's labours.[1] Since a large proportion of the work of Handel and Bach is as interesting in the lower as in the upper melodies, and since all the masters,

[1] The vertical-horizontal distinctions used in this Chapter are manifestly dangerous; skilled musicians have condemned them as overstating the truth. A better antithesis would be "horizontal" and "less horizontal"; but here again the mathematician would object. Providing it is remembered that vertical music usually contains at least one line of melody, which is obviously horizontal, and that horizontal music by its very nature makes harmonies which must be regarded as vertical, the terms should not be misleading. A careful study of the diagrams on page 32 should clear the matter up.

both past and present, resort occasionally to this melodic interweaving, it follows that sooner or later we must adapt ourselves to the two types of listening. These vertical and horizontal processes of composition are generally known as *harmony* and *polyphony* (or *counterpoint*).

Its Age.

(3) It is unsafe to pronounce judgment upon a work of art of any kind until we know the approximate date of its production. Music, like all arts, has developed, and developed at a much quicker rate than architecture, painting, and literature. The works of to-day bear no comparison with, say, the efforts of musicians 500 years ago, when music was "lisping in backward infancy." Although artists express the same thoughts and emotions, irrespective of the age to which they belong, they are only able to do so within limitations existing at the time of conception. Just as an early painting like Paolo Ucello's *Rout of San Romano* is sadly lacking in accurate perspective, so may fifteenth-century music fail in technical skill when judged by the standards of our own time. We should hesitate to express opinions, or at any rate final opinions, upon works of uncertain age and authorship, though the experienced listener is usually able to "date" within limits an unknown example.

Its Themes.

(4) We cannot profess to understand a musical composition until we recognize the thematic, rhythmic, and harmonic material used by its author. A work of ambitious proportions is usually constructed upon a number of "musical thoughts," melodic, rhythmic, or harmonic. It is customary for such basic ideas to be announced clearly upon their first appearance, and to be repeated

exactly or inexactly so that we can absorb them sufficiently to note their progress as the work advances. To give an example, Dvořák's symphony *From the New World* opens with 23 bars of slow introduction (which are not part of the movement proper, except that they anticipate what is to come) before the leading themes appear; then we hear the first main tune at least four times (each with varied instrumentation), and subsequently the second main tune three times. By now we are so used to the material subject-matter that we recognize the tunes in metamorphosis, and find such treatment stimulating and enjoyable. Our task is considerably simplified if we know the general plan of a symphony, for we are in a state of expectancy rather than suspense. It cannot be overemphasized, therefore, how valuable a knowledge of the traditional designs is to the intelligent listener.

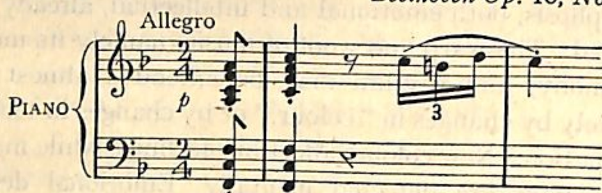
Its Craftsmanship.

(5) Mere absorption and retention of the principal themes will not carry us far in the enjoyment of a complex work, for we must be well versed in the devices of metamorphosis, both emotional and intellectual, already mentioned. The warp and woof of music, namely its melody, harmony, and rhythm may be extended almost indefinitely by changes in "colour," or by changes in technical formation. New colours affect our feelings, while material alterations are detected mentally. Emotional development occurs when a familiar fragment is exactly repeated amid new surroundings, when the accompaniment is subjected to small but telling changes, when there is gradual swelling or fading of tone, or when the music modulates, or strikes a new mood. There is, as it were, a certain strangeness pervading the known and the familiar, which arouses our emotions. Some examples may be found in

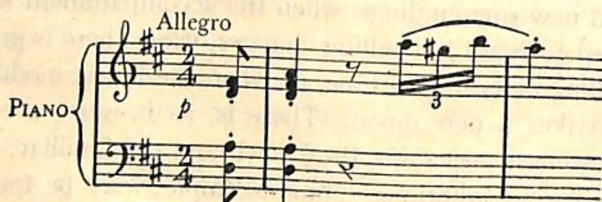
Grieg's *Erotik*, and *Once Upon a Time*, Chopin's *Prelude* No. 20 (for pianoforte), Falla's ballet-suite *The Three-Cornered Hat* (at the end of the Miller's Dance), Ravel's *Bolero*, and the orchestral variations *Brigg Fair* by Delius. There are others in plenty, but these should serve to illustrate the point. Thematic development occurs when a fragment is repeated at a higher or lower level in the scale, or in what is called "sequence," or at a new speed, or in a new rhythm, or changed from major to minor (or *vice versa*), or altered in loudness or complexity, or passed on to another instrument with differing tone, or moved from treble to bass, or given a rising instead of a falling curve—and so on. In these and many more instances the familiar is subject to metamorphosis, so that at once it becomes profoundly fresh, and almost unknown. The basic material is not altogether robbed of its vital character, although it assumes new and compelling form. A few definite examples are given below—

1. *Change of Key*. Sometimes tremendously forceful. See Beethoven's *Sonata* for piano, Op. 10, No. 2.

A. ORIGINAL *Beethoven Op. 10, No. 2*



B. DEVELOPMENT BECOMES



(First Movement.) The opening tune in F-major subsequently returns in the key of D-major.

2. *Change from Major to Minor, or vice versa.* In Beethoven's *Sonata* for piano, Op. 10, No. 1 (First Movement), the first tune in C-minor later appears in the key of C-major.

A. ORIGINAL *Beethoven Op.* 10, *No.* 1



BECOMES

B. DEVELOPMENT



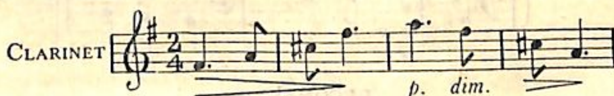
3. *Change of Musical Shape or Outline without Change of Rhythm.* An example occurs in Dvořák's symphony *From the New World* (First Movement).

A. ORIGINAL *Dvořák Op.* 95



BECOMES

B. 1ST DEVELOPMENT



The first tune of the *Allegro Molto* (following the slow introduction) appears four times in new guise about half-way through the movement. Note that the intervals of the melody are changed.

4. *Change of Rhythm without Change of Outline.* A very good example may be found in *Till Eulenspiegel*

A. Original

Strauss Op. 28

Sempre molto vivace

Orchestra

BECOMES

B. Development

Il doppio si lento

Orchestra

by Richard Strauss. The opening tune (representing Till) retains the same intervals throughout the work, but the time values of the notes constantly change.

5. *Retention of Melody with Changes in Supporting*

A. Original

Elgar Op. 40

Più tranquillo

Orchestra

BECOMES

B. 4th Development



Harmonies. This instance occurs in the treatment of the "Lovers' theme" in Elgar's *Cockaigne* Overture.

6. *Embellishment of the Main Theme by Interspersing Subsidiary Notes.* This device is frequently used in variations upon an air, as, for instance, in Elgar's

A. Original *Elgar Op.* 36



BECOMES

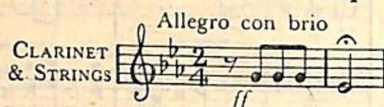
B. Development



Enigma Variations. In the section marked *B.G.M.*, two or three notes replace one of the original theme at the beginning of the work.

7. *Expansion of a Small Rhythmic Motif into a Movement.* No better instance can be cited than the

famous First Movement of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*, which grows almost entirely out of the small



four-note motif in the first two bars. This is a remarkable example of organic development.

8. *Dynamic Change to Introduce a New Mood.* The final movement of Beethoven's *Waldstein Sonata* opens



BECOMES



with a quiet idea in the section marked *Allegretto moderato*, but in the later *Prestissimo* the same tune becomes particularly forceful.

This list is not exhaustive; the listener might add to it as he pursues his studies, for the whole subject of thematic development is as vast as it is complicated.

Its Patterns.

(6) In addition to the *content* of a musical work, it is essential that we know something of its form or shape, for all works of art are cast in some kind of mould, otherwise they would be dull and pointless. Architecture, painting, and poetry rely on logical patterns for their appeal to the senses; nor is music an aimless progression of sounds. It is an art partially dependent upon designs most of which (broadly speaking) have become traditional. Even modern composers recognize the importance of design, and although they may dispense with traditional patterns, they generally present their ideas in logical and orderly sequence. The structure of literature and the structure of music, it should be noted, are much alike, since both arts have phrases, sentences, and paragraphs (or sections). Musical phrases are felt rather than seen, although performers are always aware of the sweeping curves which appear in the printed score. The untrained ear is apt to appreciate phrases in two-, four-, and eight-bar periods; more subtle groupings are used quite freely by the great composers, however, and to these the listener should gradually become accustomed. A phrase is like a written clause in that it cannot stand by itself; a succession of phrases, the last of which is rounded off to give a semblance of finality, forms a sentence, either short or long. Effective balance of sentences depends

largely upon a judicious intermingling of long and short periods. A number of sentences together form a section, a succession of sections a movement, and a few movements a work. Movements are built up in a variety of ways, and in his early approach to form the listener should remember that they generally contain large divisions balanced in groups of twos and threes, two-part patterns (Formula: $A - B$) obeying the law of question and response, and three-part patterns (Formula: $A - B - A$) embracing the principle of unity with variety. The traditional movement-forms are extensions and elaborations of these two simple schemes.

Above all, it is as well to remember that there is a world of difference between artistic design and geometric pattern. Nothing is quite so dull and boring in art as for the expected always to happen. Just as rhythm loses force by being for ever regular and uniform, so do the subtleties of structure drop below the threshold of attention when their tendencies are realized in advance. The plan and the façade of a cathedral are seldom strictly symmetrical: there are always deviations here and there which prevent the shapes from becoming too precise and severe. By an intermingling of regularity, predictability, balance, order, sameness, and simplicity with irregularity, novelty, complexity, strangeness, and unpredictability, musical forms maintain a degree of challenging excitement throughout.

Its Tone Values.

(7) Continued musical experiences sooner or later bring the question of tone to the notice of the listener. Music *is* tone, but it exists in many types and qualities. Each kind of instrument possesses individual tonal possibilities, so that when we consider the large number of instruments

in use, together with the infinite number of methods of grouping them, we see that a full symphony orchestra has innumerable tonal resources within its power. The violin, for instance, can produce varying effects when the bow is drawn near to or far from the bridge, when pressure on the bow is altered, when the strings are plucked, when the wooden part of the bow taps the strings, and when use is made of the mute.

A specific study of *acoustics* (that branch of physics concerned with sound) is, for the would-be listener, not absolutely essential. To know the scientific explanations for the differences between noise and sound, the relationships between vibration and pitch, and the meaning and importance of overtones, is to be better equipped to appreciate the function and limitations of certain orchestral instruments, and the experiments in certain directions that have been conducted by a few modern composers; but it is far more useful merely to be able to distinguish aurally between the manifold tonal qualities heard in the concert hall than to offer considered opinions upon the means of their production.

Its Composer.

(8) It has been said that a work of art breathes the personality of its author. This would appear equally true of music as of the novel, the drama, or the poem. Further, it may and often does, reflect the spirit of its age. A study of music in the light of the lives of its composers is therefore to be encouraged, providing it does not deflect the interest to the extent of ardent admiration for the man rather than his work. Beethoven's music appears all the more wonderful when we realize the conditions under which he laboured, but biographical details alone will never bring the listener into close contact with the

vital messages that this composer has bestowed upon mankind.

Intellectual Effort.

The listener who likes music and cannot thoroughly enjoy it may by now see that true appreciation involves intense activity, and that such activity is impossible without a fair grounding in those principles upon which the art is built. Intellectual effort and lively participation are necessary before the attention can become really concentrated. We see at once how indispensable is the faculty of storing up auditory patterns in the mind, and why the exercise and development of an historic sense is so essential. These in their turn help towards a cultivation of a spirit of anticipation, which should be ever present in all lovers of art. If this chapter discourages the reader because he imagines intelligent listening is overwhelmingly complicated and perplexing, he should find solace in the fact that the majority of tasks herein suggested become subconscious the more they are practised, and that, far from being odious and exhausting, the appreciation of music is a sheer joy, and an experience with which there are but few equals in this life.

HINTS AND EXERCISES BASED ON CHAPTER I

1. Balance, repetition, imitation, variety, sequence, and rhythmic line are more easily identified by ear if they are appreciated first by eye in other forms of art besides music. Time spent in studying photographs of cathedrals, statues, replicas of famous pictures, pattern designs in wallpapers, carpets, curtains, etc., (1) as a whole, and (2) in detail, is well worth the trouble. Novels, plays, and poems (especially by "classic" writers) might be studied in a similar way.

2. It is useful to make a list of one's favourite musical compositions, then group them according to their style, and to the century to which they belong. Then the outstanding tunes should

be recalled and hummed, and a count made of the number of times these tunes appear exactly and inexactly in the course of the work. In orchestral pieces an attempt should be made to identify some of the more prominent instruments. (Use of the wireless and gramophone is strongly recommended.)

3. Some books worth *studying*—

(*a*) All the "Scholes" books published by the Oxford University Press. Percy Scholes, from the time of his first book, has written for the "ordinary man." It is difficult to find anywhere simpler, clearer, and more attractive guides to appreciation for the beginner. The full list of publications is too large to detail here.

(*b*) Dunstan's *Musical Appreciation through Song* (Schofield & Sims). An eminently practical work for those who would rather study *via* the song than the instrumental composition.

(*c*) Mason's *ABC Guide to Music* (Paul & Co.). A well-written work for beginners.

(*d*) Macpherson's *Music and Its Appreciation* (Williams). This is comparatively easy, and might well follow the above.

(*e*) Spalding: *Music—An Art and a Language* (Schmidt & Co.). This digs a little deeper still.

(*f*) *The Musical Companion*, edited by A. L. Bacharach (Gollancz), is an indispensable compendium for all lovers of music.

(*g*) *Discovering Music*, by McKinney and Anderson (Pitman), is a most useful guide for the beginner.

(*h*) *The Pursuit of Music*, by Walford Davies (Nelson), approaches the subject in a new and fascinating way. Its author needs no introduction.

(*i*) Vernon Lee's *Music and Its Lovers* (Allen & Unwin). This is something quite different, since it is the work of a psychologist. It is based on more than a hundred answers to a Musical Questionnaire distributed over twenty-five years ago, together with comments thereon.

4. It is very useful to know exactly where to lay hands upon Grove's *Dictionary of Music* (Macmillan). This classic work, in five huge volumes, was recently revised, and is generally recognized as the standard encyclopaedia for all musical purposes. It is in the reference department of most public libraries. A more recent encylopaedia is *The Oxford Companion to Music* (Oxford University Press).

5. One of the best ways of preserving acquaintance with music already heard is to keep a file of annotated programmes of all

musical concerts attended, plus press cuttings, etc. Sometimes *annotated* programmes are unavailable at concerts, and references to the file then brings reward, though it is better to study notes prior to the concert than during the performance. A nucleus might be formed with the five volumes of notes (on more than 300 works) by Rosa Newmarch, published by the Oxford University Press.

6. This chapter has stressed the value of listening to a work a number of times (in a short period) if it is to be fully appreciated. This is comparatively easy for owners of gramophones and records. But wireless listeners, in normal times, with a good set and a copy of *World Radio*, are also able to follow up several performances of the same work within the course of a week, if they make full use of their opportunities.

7. Gramophone enthusiasts should consult—

(*a*) Scholes: *The First Book of the Gramophone Record*. Scholes: *The Second Book of the Gramophone Record* (Oxford University Press). Johnson: *The Gramophone in Education* (Pitman). Wilson: *Music and the Gramophone* (The Gramophone Publications, Ltd.).

(*b*) *The Gramophone*—published monthly.

(*c*) *The Columbia History of Music*—five albums, each containing eight 10-inch records and an illuminating booklet tracing the history of the art from the earliest times to the present day. Vol. I, "To the Beginning of the Seventeenth Century"; Vol. II, "To the Death of Bach and Handel"; Vol. III, "To Beethoven"; Vol. IV, "Romanticism and Nationalism"; Vol. V, "Twentieth Century Music." Nothing like this has ever appeared before, and in the able hands of Dr. Scholes even a child can watch and hear the art develop. The examples are well chosen, and the booklet contains pictorial illustrations of composers, instruments, and musical scores, while the text includes full translations of choral works (in addition to the original tongue), together with aids to listening.

(*d*) *Two Thousand Years of Music* (Parlophone). An album of twelve 10-inch records, plus a not-so-useful textbook, covering a period from the earliest times to the end of the eighteenth century. Some of the recordings are unique, and the work serves as a useful addition to the Columbia History.

8. For wireless listeners and pianola players, Dr. Scholes has written two further books: *Everybody's Guide to Broadcast Music* (Oxford University Press), *The Appreciation of Music by Means of the Pianola and Duo-Art* (Oxford University Press).

CHAPTER II

THE BEGINNINGS OF MUSIC

THIS is not a chapter on listening. It is a sketch of that early period of musical history which has left no legacy, but which, of necessity, falls within the compass of this essay to form a complete account of the progress of the art from its earliest beginnings to the present day. Very little of the music of long ago exists, but listening to what there is of it is a dull business if we know nothing about it.

How music began is a matter of conjecture. Everything points to the fact that song preceded instrumental melody, for who can conceive of a mother, even of the remotest age of barbarism, who did not croon her baby to sleep? If women were the first vocalists, the menfolk could not have been far behind with their wild battle-cries, or their exciting hunting-songs.

Origins of Instrumental Music.

The origins of instrumental music, belonging (as we imagine) to a later era, must also be inferred, since there is no direct evidence. Possibly the early instruments foreshadowed from the very first the four groups of the orchestra as we know them to-day. An archer may have unwittingly discovered the secret of the stringed instrument; a shepherd, dallying with reeds, may have found by accident the principle of the wood-wind instrument; a herdsman, using a ram's horn, may have been the first potential brass player; and a backwoodsman, signalling to a distant tribe on a hollow tree trunk, may have beaten rhythms akin to the drummer's in Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Doubtless, the harps, flutes, trumpets, and

2—(G.63)

drums of the Abyssinians, Babylonians, Egyptians, and Hebrews owed their origins to the accidental discoveries of primitive men. Save for scattered scraps of information that have been gleaned from carvings and bas-reliefs on temples, tombs, and other ruins, we are totally ignorant of the nature of these instruments, or of the music they produced.

Early Vocal Music.

At first, vocal and instrumental music developed somewhat independently, and it was a long time—many centuries in fact—before they became inter-related. Consequently the history of each type has to be treated separately at this stage. As far as vocal music is concerned, there are reasons for believing that the Chinese of early history grouped sounds logically, but, for all practical purposes, we need not hark back beyond the Ancient Greek theorists of 2,000 years ago. We know that they arranged sounds into seven systems (which we call *modes*).

Out of these scarcely understood Greek systems evolved the eight Church Modes, the work of St. Ambrose and St. Gregory during the fourth and sixth centuries A.D. Nearly a thousand years later, four more modes were added, thus making twelve in all. These twelve may be divided into six pairs, and each pair differs in "flavour" from every other pair owing to the fact that the arrangement of tones and semitones within the octave is different in each case. The effect must be heard to be understood, and the reader is advised to make one or two simple experiments at the pianoforte keyboard.

A "white-note" scale which begins on Middle C gives us the eight notes of the scale of C major. But a "white-note" scale which begins on D does *not* give us the scale of D major; it gives us an unfamiliar scale which in fact

is the old Dorian Mode. We arrive at the scale of D major only when two of the white notes (F and C) are sharpened and become black notes. We now have the familiar major scale because the order of tones and semitones within the octave D to D is the same as it was for the first scale C to C.

All our major scales are built up in the same way. Indeed we can only distinguish between C major and D major when we possess the gift of "absolute pitch." But there is a difference of "flavour" between our major and minor scales because the order of tones and semitones in each is not alike. Each pair of modes had its distinctive flavour because of its peculiar order of tones and semitones. The constituents of each pair possessed the same eight notes, but the first note in one would become the fifth note of the mode in the other. Thus the Dorian Mode mentioned above became the Hypodorian Mode when the same eight notes were played with A as the starting-note. The reader should not imagine, however, that the Dorian Mode *must* begin on D; it can begin at any pitch providing the correct order of tones and semitones is maintained.

Some of these modes sound very strange to our ears, because we seldom hear them to-day, although certain composers are attracted by them, and use them occasionally in their works. We must not imagine they were harmonized by the Greeks, however, for chordal music as we now understand it was practically non-existent, and did not arrive for centuries afterwards. The Greeks, and indeed the early Christians, were (as far as we know) quite content with simple melodic music sung in *unison* (men and women singing an octave apart, of course); in their great dramas, even, where chanting took a prominent part, the only semblance of part singing was the echoing and answering device of two sections,

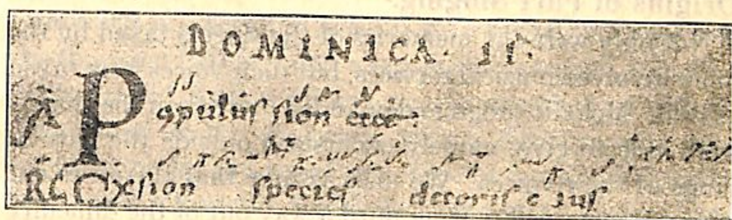
which sounded much like the method of psalm singing (*antiphon*) still heard to-day. Right up to A.D. 800 there are no indications of voices or instruments proceeding otherwise than in unison. This is so remarkable that historians have alluded to the advent of "plural melody," as they call it, as one of the most important events of the last 2,000 years.

Church Music.

With the decline of Greece, music suffered a temporary setback, the Romans being intent on progress of other kinds, while art suffered. Yet while the pomp and show of Rome continued in the streets, below in the catacombs the Christians quietly sang their psalms and hymns after the fashion of the Hebrews in the time of Our Lord. For centuries they dared not worship in the light of day, and until Constantine forbade persecution in A.D. 313 the majority of services were held in secret. We owe a debt of gratitude to the Roman Church for the way in which she nursed the musical art through those difficult times. She appointed priests, capable choirs and choirmasters, and encouraged the art of beautiful worship in every way, with the result that when little else but Folk Music was heard in the world outside sacred music was slowly but surely pushing towards a goal. Those examples of the period which still exist do not impress us upon first hearing; they are in Latin, they are modal (not quite Greek in style, but similar), they are unaccompanied, and, above all, they lack the swing and lilt that we are accustomed to in these days. Moreover, they were all sung from memory (written music being unknown), the priest leading, and the choir imitating in unison.

The absence of lilt or regular accents in early Christian music is explained by the fact that the words of the

services were at first little more than *spoken*. It was not a case of fitting words to melodies, but of repeating them to sounds close together, i.e. with small variation in pitch. The inflections of the voice, and the natural accents in the phrases determined the tune. In time, of course, the melodies developed and moved from note to note more boldly, larger leaps intervening, but the natural spoken rhythm of the phrases remained. This vocalized speech is known as *plainsong*, and for 700 years it flourished in

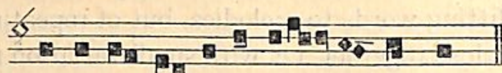


FRAGMENT FROM AN OLD MANUSCRIPT SHOWING NEUMES WRITTEN OVER THE LATIN TEXT

From *A History of Music*, by Stanford and Forsyth (Macmillan)

the Roman Church, most of it being sung by heart. Gradually, its complexities became too much for the singers' memories, with the result that a system of shorthand (the earliest form of musical notation) was invented, called *neumes*, which consisted of little signs written over the corresponding words of the psalter. In time, these proved insufficient, and by a slow process a new system developed wherein square-shaped notes were written on four lines. There were no bar-lines, except at the end of phrases, neither were there time signatures, since the rhythm of the words continued to determine the rhythm of the melody. The example on page 30 shows the smallness of the vocal intervals and the *vertical* method of indicating leaps. The curious clef sign denotes the position of Middle C: it could be placed on any one of the four stave lines.

1. Plainsong Notation



2. Modern Notation



Origins of Part Singing.

Not only were the memories of the singers taxed by the more involved musical services, but their voices were taxed as well. Melodic progress demanded more than the singers were able to give, namely excursions outside the natural range of their voices. We may assume that the notes out of reach remained unsung until a way out of the difficulty was discovered, perhaps by accident. The idea of the choir splitting up into altos, tenors, and basses, each section singing the tune announced by the priest, *but at a pitch best suited to it*, was hit upon, part-singing being thereby introduced to the world probably for the first time. The basses commenced and proceeded with the tune a few notes (five) lower, while the altos sang the complete tune a few notes (four) higher, the result being three strictly parallel parts, of which the centre line (sung by the tenors) was the original—the *canto firmo* or "fixed voice" —and the outer lines the *organal voices*. It is interesting to note that the lower line never descended below bass C, probably because this was the deepest note on the early organs, but remained there until it was time to ascend. This may account for the next development, the droning bass, which brought about oblique, as distinct from parallel parts.

Parallel singing was probably at its height about

A.D. 1000, and during the next hundred years the parts became less and less parallel, moving in some cases in contrary directions, the tenor voice meanwhile remaining the *vox principalis*, the original part sung by the priest. During the fourteenth century, a new type of parallel music, consisting of organal voices moving at intervals of thirds and sixths (not fourths and fifths) above the tenors, was introduced. *Organum*, the forerunner of counterpoint, requires the ear to listen horizontally, while *fauxbourdon* (the system of parallel thirds and sixths), the forerunner of harmony, encourages vertical listening. At the time that fauxbourdon was establishing itself, a further device called *descant* sprang up; it consisted of a *canto firmo* sung by the choirmen, with a florid melody at a higher pitch by the choirboys. One of our oldest English tunes, *The Agincourt Song*, illustrates this device admirably. Hymn tunes are thus treated in many of our churches to-day.

By the year A.D. 1500 the age of counterpoint had begun. No longer was there a *canto firmo*—a main tune upon which the other parts were more or less dependent—but each voice or part was a singable melody in itself, and as important as any other. Even when there were as many as six parts, the total effect, heard horizontally or vertically, was satisfying to the ear.

Counterpoint.

Contrapuntal writing, or the music of woven melodies, is full of interest, but its enjoyment demands clear, concentrated listening of a kind which the beginner finds extremely difficult. In these days we instinctively listen vertically, devoting most attention to the upper melody; in the days of the early Christian Church people instinctively listened horizontally, singling out the *vox principalis*

from the less important voices, and caring little for the harmonic effects, such as they were. In counterpoint, the attention should be equally divided among the parts.

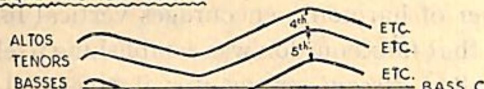
THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHORAL MUSIC

A. POLYPHONY, i.e. HORIZONTAL STYLE

1. PARALLEL SINGING (ORGANUM)



2. OBLIQUE MOTION SINGING



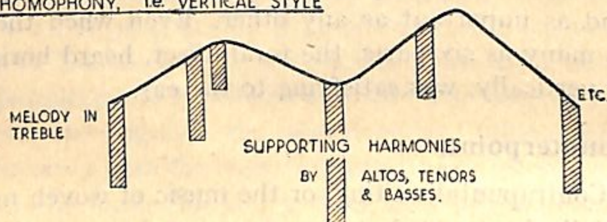
3. THE ROUND, CATCH, OR CANON



4. CONTRARY MOTION SINGING



B. HOMOPHONY, i.e. VERTICAL STYLE



One or two special types of counterpoint require fuller explanation, the simplest being the round, catch, or canon. Here the parts are often equally pitched, and carry the same tune, but instead of moving simultaneously, they commence consecutively, treading as it were upon another's

tail. This recreation, peculiar to our own country, still exists, a popular example being *Three Blind Mice*, which was actually in print in 1609. Shakespeare frequently mentions catches, while the hymn tune *Tallis's Canon* (with treble and tenor parts alike) belongs to the same period. But the apex of horizontal composition was the *fugue*, of which the pattern is so detailed that its examination is for the time being held over.

Secular Music.

So far we have watched the progress of sacred choral music from the earliest times to the end of the sixteenth century. We must not forget, however, that while the Church attracted the more talented artists and composers to her chapels, monasteries, and abbeys, some few gifted (but untrained) musicians remained aloof, composing simple secular songs for the enjoyment of the peasantry. Who they were nobody knows. Many of their songs still exist in the shape of folk tunes. Folk music aped Church music in many respects, for in the early examples the melodies moved gingerly from note to note, avoiding wide ranges and large intervals; moreover they were modal, they were sung solo-wise (or in unison) and without accompaniment, and from memory; but the words were in the vulgar tongue, and not in Latin. The great difference between folk music and Church music, however, was in the rhythm: the former was set to regular, square-cut poems, while the latter depended upon prose passages chosen mainly from the Scriptures. The one style was metrical, the other free. Since the country people enjoyed stanza songs better than plainsong sung by the priests and choirs, the Church introduced hymns into the services that the congregations might actively worship. Metrical songs of another order were sung by the bards, who thus

recorded the deeds of great heroes. Centuries later the noblemen of France and Germany imitated the idea, composing their own ballads, and singing them at the castles all over Europe. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries these men greatly increased in numbers; in France they were called Troubadours and Trouvères, whilst in Germany they were known as Minnesingers and Meistersingers. They were professional musicians belonging to the upper classes, who composed and sang because they loved their art. Men of lower social status, who also travelled from place to place, and sang the same or similar songs to the common folk, were known as Minstrels and Jongleurs.

Madrigals.

Secular *part songs* first appeared in Italy in the fourteenth century. They were called Madrigals, either because some of them were addressed to the Blessed Mother, or because others were set to words of pastoral character, the Italian word for a herd being *mandria*. They were usually in three, four, or five parts (unaccompanied), each part being melodious as in the Church music of the day. And then, for the space of nearly a century, there was a lull in their popularity, followed by a new outburst of enthusiasm in Western Europe, and especially in England; during this fifteenth and sixteenth century revival, sacred as well as secular writers took part, and many collections of madrigals appeared in print. Some of the earliest examples of British music consist of delightful part songs; they fall roughly into two main types, the contrapuntal (or horizontal), and the harmonic (or vertical). The former were the madrigals proper, resembling the Italian forerunners, and were sometimes played on string instruments, whence the explanation of the phrase on the title pages—"Apt for Voyces or Viols." The latter were more like

harmonized melodies, the upper voice carrying the tune (which was the same for each verse of the poem), while the other voices provided an accompaniment. These were called *Ayres*, or if they had a *fa la la* refrain, *Ballets* (possibly because they were sung while dancing). During the Golden Age in England some of the finest madrigals of all time were written. Men like Byrd, Bennett, Gibbons, Morley, Weelkes, Dowland, Wilbye, and Farmer—all born between the years 1550 and 1650—left a heritage, a store of delight for those who are able to catch the idiom of this branch of the art.

Instrumental Development.

The true history of the growth of instrumental music may never be known: the facts are too lean and scattered to admit of a continuous narrative. We know something of the shape and form of instruments dating back to very early times, but there is no evidence of the kind of music that was played upon them, nor of the effects that were produced. Harps, lyres, flutes, trumpets, and drums there were in plenty, the tone being cruder, thinner, and less attractive than with similar instruments to-day. There seems to be little interesting information to record on the subject until about the beginning of the fifteenth century; then there appears to be a definite line of progress, both in instrumental construction and instrumental composition, which pushes towards a point of climax in the time of Beethoven.

Elizabethan England was rich in instruments of music. There were the two families of strings—Lutes and Viols—the wood family of Recorders, and keyboard instruments such as the Virginals, Harpsichord, and Organ. Performance on one of these, or, alternatively, the ability to join in a madrigal group, was regarded not so much as an

achievement as a common sign of sound education and culture. These were great days for England. The lust that spurred knights to rove abroad for deeds of daring quickened those at home to pursue the cult of learning. British composers won esteem throughout Europe; never before or since have we been able to boast that we led the way in the musical art.

Medieval fiddles gave way to viols, the precursors of the modern violin family, during the fifteenth century. A *chest* or family of these instruments graced nearly every house of distinction. In shape the viols were much like a Double Bass, i.e. their shoulders curved upwards; and there were *frets* on the finger-board as on a banjo. Their tone was duller than modern string tone. Very little special viol music was written at first, so the players converted many of the contemporary songs (and especially the madrigals) into instrumental pieces.

The other string instruments were the lutes, shaped like mandolins, but with longer necks. They had many strings, any number from a dozen up to twenty, which were plucked with the fingers. The music they produced (mainly accompaniments to songs) was soothing and tender—too quiet, in fact, for modern ears. Lutes disappeared when concerted music for strings became popular.

Recorders (or fipple flutes), commonly used in sets of fours, were at one time the favourite wood instruments. They were held vertically like a clarinet, and the notes were produced by an air reed such as may be found in a tin whistle. The tone was sweet, though solemn. The cross-blown flute, held horizontally, and seen in present-day orchestras, eventually superseded the recorders.

Harpsichords, which followed virginals, and which preceded pianofortes, were the common domestic

keyboard instruments of Europe for 300 years. The strings were plucked (and not struck by hammers as in the pianoforte), with the result that the tone was unaffected by difference of touch. For this reason, and because the effect was more metallic than that of the piano, harpsichords lost favour for over a century. The pianoforte, with its sustaining pedal, was the instrument *par excellence* for the new style of music. A bass note with a harmony above it could be held, while a melody moved above it. In contrapuntal music the sustaining pedal is definitely bad. Thus (to a degree) the harpsichord and pianoforte represent the horizontal-vertical antithesis mentioned so often in this book.

A.D. 1600 : A Landmark.

Before bringing this chapter to a conclusion, it might be well to take a bird's-eye view of the position of music in the year 1600, an approximate date which is a landmark in the history of the art. It seems difficult to believe that music was still in its infancy at this time, although careful examination shows that little progress was made during the long centuries of the Dark Ages. Like the flower bulb hidden away in winter, conserving its energies for the spring, music lay in the safe keeping of the Church, awaiting its blossom-time in the seventeenth century, when new ideals, new ideas, and new methods forced it into prominence. Then it burst forth rapidly and reached maturity in the classical age—brought to a climax by Beethoven. Despite its high standards, even classicism had its frontiers, which Beethoven himself decided to trample down, and by the beginning of the nineteenth century, music entered a new land of romance, with its far-reaching territories, endless panoramas, and multiple opportunities for exploration. Here music remains. We

are being told that Modern Art has invaded yet a new domain. Perhaps it is too soon to form a definite opinion.

Broadly speaking, then, music has passed through *three* main stages: (1) the pre-classic era, (2) the classic, or "ideal" era, and (3) the post-classic, or romantic and modern era. How the listener should adapt his methods of listening to the music of each of these three stages is the theme of the chapters that follow.

HINTS AND EXERCISES BASED ON CHAPTER II

1. The modes should be played over on the piano a number of times and *hummed*. A search might then be made for modal melodies: folk songs and hymn tunes provide a happy hunting ground, but there are more exciting fields in the works of contemporary composers, such as Holst, Vaughan Williams, Delius, and so on.

2. Compare photographs of Greek and Roman temples, and decide which appeal more to the eye. Now carry the study a stage further by comparing the various styles of Greek, Graeco-Roman, and Gothic architecture with the various musical styles. Although very indefinite, certain counterparts can be found.

3. Study very carefully the first volume of the *Columbia History of Music*, using both the gramophone records and the textbook.

4. The records on the *Progress of Music* by Dr. Dyson (issued by the International Educational Society) should also be heard if possible.

5. Note how the construction of a round or canon may be compared with that of a diaper wallpaper pattern.

Now refer to the famous vocal canon (probably written by William Byrd) called *Non nobis Domine*, which is often used at banquets and other festive occasions as a "grace after meat." Note that the "motif" (technically known as the *Guida*) is modal. Students may care to discover which mode is used. Note also that, like the sixteenth-century English folk tune *Dargason*, the "motif" has no end, but tends to turn back upon itself, thereby causing endless repetition. Finally, turn to Grove's Dictionary under *Non nobis Domine* to read of the many designs (all canons) which can be built upon the original "motif." One of the solutions permits of the tune being completely inverted.

With *Non nobis Domine* still in mind, return to the comparison with wallpaper patterns. Observe how some diaper designs

contain motifs which are not complete in themselves, but which reach out (as it were) for their counterparts. Note also that the principle of inversion is not unknown in the art of wallpaper design.

6. Some canons written in more recent times are—

(a) *Goldberg Variations*—Bach.
(b) Canon from 1st Act of *Fidelio*—Beethoven.
(c) *Canon in B-minor for Organ*—Schumann.
(d) *Canon in B-flat minor*, Op. 38—Grieg.
(e) *Canon in B-flat major* for Organ—Guilmant.
(f) *L'Arlésienne* (first tune)—Bizet.
(g) *Violin Sonata* (last movement)—Franck.
(h) Parts of the *Pastoral Symphony* (first movement) and *Fifth Symphony* (slow movement)—Beethoven.

7. Make a point of hearing some Elizabethan music, such as (a) madrigals, (b) pieces for the virginals. (See Alec Rowley's pianoforte arrangements, published by Winthrop Rogers, Ltd.)

8. Trace the history of the part-song in England from the madrigal to the modern glee. Do not overlook its progress in opera, cantata, and oratorio.

9. Most of the Elizabethan instruments are heard in the *Columbia History of Music* (see (3) above); but the recorder is not included. There are, however, extra records by the Dolmetsch family issued by Columbia, and the recorder may be heard on Col. DB 1062.

10. The thirteenth century round *Sumer is Icumen In* is worth studying; the original manuscript might also be seen in the British Museum. Notice that it is in canon, that it is for six parts, that it is in the major mode, and that it has both sacred and secular words.

11. Try to read some of the hymns printed in plainsong notation in the *English Hymnal*.

12. Study the "Diagrammatic History of Music," facing p. 36. Note, first of all, the date line at the top. Two dotted vertical lines in red divide the table into three definite parts: (1) the period Before Christ, (2) thence to A.D. 1600, and (3) from 1600 to 1934. A.D. 1600, it will be remembered, is a convenient date because it marks the origin of music *as art*. Below the date line are given the labels for the great historic periods as usually shown in textbooks.

The red asterisks, indicating those species of music composed by country folk and broadcast by travelling musicians, are

intended to draw attention to the fact that the history of music *as art* does not depend to any great extent upon these movements, which came to an end in the nineteenth century.

The third horizontal section shows the course of music taking two definite directions—*via* the Church and the country folk—during the last stages of the fall of the Roman Empire. Further allusion to this is made in Chapter VII.

Below are shown (very roughly) the extent of the "Vertical" and "Horizontal" eras of composition. Bound up with these are the many scale systems, and their influence upon the use of rhythm.

In the middle of the diagram we see how music has gradually developed in its appeal to the senses, emotions, and intellect. (See Chapter I.) Its use in religion has been continuous, except for a brief period in Puritan England, but this lapse is being seriously doubted by contemporary historians. By way of drama and literature, music has slowly become allied to philosophy, theosophy, and so on.

Lower down we notice how from the simple solo song the various vocal and instrumental forms have developed, and how music to-day is being spread by means of scientific agencies.

Finally, the composers who have directly influenced and extended the art from the earliest times to the present day are given, together with dates.

13. A further study of early music may be made by reading—

(*a*) Goddard: *The Rise of Music* (Reeves).
(*b*) Smith: *The World's Earliest Music* (Reeves).
(*c*) Williams: *Music of the Ancient Greeks* (Novello).
(*d*) Hadow (Ed.): *Oxford History of Music*, Vol. I, Chap. IV.
(*e*) Stanford and Forsyth: *A History of Music*, Chaps. I, II, and III (Macmillan).
(*f*) Various articles in Grove's Dictionary and The Oxford Companion to Music.

14. For fuller information on madrigals see *The English Madrigal Composers*, by E. H. Fellowes (Oxford University Press).

CHAPTER III

LISTENING TO FOLK MUSIC

LISTENING to folk music is simple and enjoyable when tackled in the right spirit and with a background of information sufficient to free it from the standards and subtleties of that larger realm of literature in sound—art music.

Character.

Folk music is the "art" of a bygone age, an age far removed in character from our own, an age of untutored men, crude in their music-makings, an age when, every bit as human as we are to-day, peasants poured forth their inmost feelings and aspirations. We find their utterances in the narrative form of sagas, legends, and folklore, and in spontaneous efforts to burst forth into song with words little better than doggerel, and tunes fresh, clean, and primitively lovely, though often lacking in high artistic craftsmanship. We find, too, that they expressed their uncontrolled feelings in country dances with equally simple tunes which call up visions of village greens and ribboned maypoles, fiddlers and serpent players, and care-free morris dancers surrounded by groups of merrymakers. On the other hand, some are tinged with sorrow and tragedy.

The Folk Age.

This happy era of folk music seems to have had a long history, which began to wane about the time of the Battle of Waterloo. While village communities were independent of outside pleasures it flourished: but when the ogre of

mechanism and industrialism appeared, its days were numbered. But for the work of Cecil Sharp, Baring Gould, Lucy Broadwood, and others, just at the time it was disappearing, the present generation might have been very much the poorer. Fortunately, hundreds of melodies and poems were salved and written down for the first time, and thus preserved to posterity.

The Approach to Folk Music.

In listening to a piece of folk music we must keep at the back of our minds the fact that we are hearing the communal cry of a clan rather than the individual expression of a particular peasant. We must therefore, not listen to it as to art music, nor must we judge it as we judge the work of a classic. Folk music does not pretend to vie with the classics, since it is in a category of its own. Yet it possesses a compensating spontaneity, sincerity, and primitive beauty, coupled with crystalline simplicity. An important fact is that the tunes were never imprinted upon paper, but only on the lips of their singers, thus causing them to suffer considerable transitions in the course of time, the result of intentional and unintentional individual alteration. A folk tune is a melody pure and simple, having little or nothing to do with harmony and accompaniment as we understand it to-day. Its beauty lies chiefly in its outline or "melodic shape." Many a folk tune was based on one of the old Church modes, which may explain why some people find a certain strangeness in what are otherwise straightforward melodies. Further, when the songs were sung by the country folk, they were seldom if ever accompanied harmonically, though instruments probably joined in in unison. We are sometimes misled by the effective accompaniments that many collectors add to the tunes, because we may imagine

that the songs were originally harmonized. Lastly, it is important to notice the pregnant rhythm that exists in many of the tunes. Some of the most captivating melodies are metrically irregular, yet highly rhythmical; five and seven beats to the bar are frequently found; tunes hovering between simple and compound time are not unusual; and constant changing of time in successive bars sometimes occurs.

Folk Poetry.

Folk poetry is as amusing as it is varied. The product of uncouth rustics, it rarely rises above doggerel, and when at times the sentiments begin to soar, the manner of expression becomes singularly direct and unrefined, A song in the first person, in which the pronouns *I*, *we*, or *us* appear, refers as a rule to a trade or profession rather than to a specific individual. Repetitions of colloquial phrases like *As I went a-walking*—especially at the beginning of a verse—are very common. Meaningless choruses, and nonsense syllables such as *Ri fol, ri fol,* frequently appear. The words, like the melodic settings, assume different guises in various parts of the country to such an extent that two versions of one poem are often entirely dissimilar. When both air and poem of one song suffer thus, it is by no means easy to trace the common source of origin.

Types.

Folk songs fall into a number of obvious groups: the predominating type is that of the village wag who sings on topics near and dear to him in his daily work and play. Tales of love-making and love-breaking, related bluntly and without reserve, are the most common; soldier and sailor songs, including shanties (or chanties),

are almost as numerous; some hundreds of drinking songs, many of them intensely humorous, have been discovered; pastoral songs of ploughing, sheep shearing, and harvest exist; and they contrast well with the poaching and highwaymen choruses, so full of meaning at the time they were first composed; there are also the songs of occupation or labour songs (in rhythm with the type of work), the songs of country sport, and the queer carols and cumulative songs—half sacred and half profane.

National Characteristics.

All nations have their folk music: it germinated, developed, and withered away much as it did in this country. The folk era throughout the various parts of the world was, roughly speaking, concurrent. These "tunes of the soil," wherever we find them, are fundamentally alike, though they carry a special flavour which reveals national characteristics just as surely as do legends and other links with the past. Even in our own islands there are distinct types: the English folk song is happy and care-free on the whole, genuinely sincere, and rarely given to gush and passion: sometimes mysticism and symbolism creep in—especially in carols—though these attributes are more peculiar to Scottish, and particularly Hebridean examples. The Scottish folk tune, with its rhythmic snap, piquant flavour, and hearty "cock o' the north" atmosphere, is easily recognizable. Many such tunes are neither major nor minor, nor even modal, but *pentatonic*, i.e. based on a charming five-note scale consisting of a major scale less its fourth and seventh degrees (*fah* and *te*). Any note in this scale may be the keynote, so there are five variants in all.

Compared with English and Scottish music, the native tunes of Wales are stronger and broader in contour, more

hymn-like, and deeper yet slower in their appeal. Irish tunes are perhaps even more emotional, more lyrical, and of high craftsmanship.

On the Continent we find French songs either dainty or unusually dramatic; German songs heavier and heartier; Central European (Slav) songs lyrical, breezy, vigorous, and abrupt; Russian songs gloomy and rugged; Spanish songs languorous and dreamy, and Hebrew songs spiritual and dignified. American-negro folk songs are quaintly beautiful and deeply religious.

Fusion of Folk Music and Art Music.

Folk music, to be enjoyed, must be regarded in the spirit of its makers. So far we have kept this idea in mind, disregarding any criticisms that might apply when it is judged by purely artistic standards. There is, in fact, very little in common between folk music and art music, although since the renaissance of native tunes in recent times there has been a world-wide tendency on the part of eminent musicians to build up national schools of composition partially dependent on the expressions of the early racial melodists. Thus, we have to-day a number of "national" composers who have written important works based on the airs and rhythms of their own countryside. In England, Vaughan Williams not only set out to unearth forgotten tunes from Somerset, Warwick, Gloucester, and Norfolk, but he utilized them later in some of his contributions to musical literature. His operas, *Hugh the Drover* and *Sir John in Love*, his Ballet for Orchestra, *King Cole*, and his *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* are thus devised.

Similarly, Gustav Holst, though no collector, steeped many of his best compositions in British folk idioms, as, for instance, the Suites for Military Bands, *St. Paul's*

Suite for Strings, *Jupiter* (No. 4 of the seven *Planets* for Orchestra), and the *Fugal Concerto*.

Frederick Delius has used the unique Lincolnshire tune *Brigg Fair* in his set of orchestral variations bearing the same title. He also used Negro tunes to good effect in *Appalachia*.

Percy Grainger's rollicking music is often based on folk dance tunes, as, for example, in *Shepherd's Hey*, *Mock Morris*, *Molly on the Shore*, and *Country Gardens*.

Abroad, we find Russia in the van of national music: through the efforts of *The Five* (Balakiref, Borodin, Mussorgsky, Cui, and Rimsky-Korsakov) she now possesses a great heritage of truly native work. In the wake of these men followed Tchaikovsky, and Stravinsky, who have given an unmistakable Russian flavour to their compositions.

Scandinavia also boasts of a number of representative writers, of whom the greatest and most typical is Grieg. The purity and sweetness of his music (reminiscent of the pine forests of the northern peninsula) are beloved the world over. Finland, not far away, has pressed her claims through Palmgren, Melartin, and Järnefelt. Sibelius, one of the greatest composers alive to-day, rarely uses Finnish national melodies, although he makes extensive use of national legends in his music. In all the representative compositions of Northern Europe we find freshness and celerity of thought predominant.

The distinctive Bohemian composer is often thought to be Dvořák, but this is not strictly true. Not only Slav, but Negro and Scotch rhythms occur in his works, whereas in the music of Smetana we find veritable Czech idioms.

The remaining races of the Continent, with the exception of France (where music is regarded as an aristocratic

art), all have their representative nationalists. Pfitzner embodies the spirit of Germany, Falla, Albéniz, and Granados are typical of the mystery and ecstasy of Spanish life, Malipiero and Respighi are very Italian, while Chopin, Scharwenka, and Moszkowski express the native feelings of Poland.

Finally, we find national music, and the folk idioms from which it springs, not only agreeable, but instructive. Folk music itself is, in a sense, strong, because it delivers its message in miniature, and this message is outspoken and to the point; this very strength and directness give it valuable local colouring, a qualification that marks it out as the voice of the layman who may know little of the technique of art, rather than of the artist who sometimes speaks in a language unintelligible to many a layman, but when the artist deigns to enlist native idioms and incorporate them into his larger works, then there is all the more likelihood of the layman comprehending him, and proclaiming him a mouthpiece of his race.

HINTS AND EXERCISES BASED ON CHAPTER III

1. The only way to cultivate a love for folk music is to hear plenty of it. There are many collections, some of which have already been cited; others are—

(a) Baring-Gould: *Songs of the West* (Methuen).

(b) Broadwood: *English Traditional Songs and Carols* (Boosey).

(c) Kennedy Fraser: *Songs of the Hebrides* (Boosey).

(d) Kidson: *Old English Country Dances* (Taphouse).

(e) Kidson: *Traditional Tunes of Yorkshire* (Taphouse).

(f) Kidson and Neal: *English Folk Song and Dance* (Cambridge University Press).

(g) Moffat and Kidson: *Minstrelsy of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales* (four volumes) (Augener).

(h) Cecil Sharp: *Folk-song Airs* (Novello).

(i) Cecil Sharp: *Folk-dance Airs* (Novello).

(j) Terry: *The Shanty Book* (Curwen).

2. Each folk tune heard should be examined for its pattern and its mode.

3. Four folk songs based on the same theme: (1) *My Man John* (Somerset); (2) *O, No, John* (Somerset); (3) *The Keys of Heaven* (Cheshire); (4) *The Keys of Canterbury* (Somerset). Read the words of each very carefully and note points of agreement and disagreement. Then discover which of the four differs from the others in mode, and in time. Finally observe that no two pattern forms are alike, nor do any two agree in phrase lengths.

4. In listening to folk music of other lands, try to draw parallels between national tunes and national characteristics.

5. Listen to the gramophone record (H.M.V. E473) of the Oriana Madrigal Society singing the Lincolnshire folk tune *Brigg Fair* (arranged by Percy Grainger). Compare it with the orchestral variations *Brigg Fair* by Delius. In what mode is the tune?

6. The following works (all of which are recorded for the gramophone) should be studied for their local colouring—

Balakiref: *Russia.*
Dvořák: *Slavonic Dances.*
Falla: *Nights in the Gardens of Spain.*
Grieg: *Norwegian Dances* ; *Peer Gynt.*
Granados: *Goyescas.*
Mussorgsky: *Pictures at an Exhibition.*
Respighi: *The Fountains of Rome.*
Smetana: *The Bartered Bride* Overture.

7. What English folk songs are used in the following works?
Holst: *Fugal Concerto* (Finale); *St. Paul's Suite* (Finale).
Vaughan Williams: *Fantasia on Christmas Carols; Fantasia on Sussex Folk-Songs*; *Hugh the Drover*; *Norfolk Rhapsody, No.* 1; *Norfolk Rhapsody, No.* 2; *Sir John in Love.*

8. Discover further works, beyond those already mentioned, which depend to some extent upon native melodies.

9. It is not generally known that H.M.V. and Columbia have issued special series of folk dances of many lands, recorded mainly for use by dancing groups and schools. The English collection contains examples of Morris, Sword, and Country dances: it has been produced under the direction of the English Folk Dance Society, and is therefore valuable artistically, as well as for recreation. Owners of gramophones should certainly purchase some of these recordings, and note how cleverly the music is presented.

CHAPTER IV

HORIZONTAL LISTENING

The attitude of the intelligent listener towards horizontal music should resemble that of the master towards his pupils: in a modern system of education the teacher regards the child, not the class, as a single unit, and bases his work on the individual needs of the members, even though he may be training all at once. Horizontal music, though heard *en masse*, demands especial attention to its individual parts, which must be followed separately yet simultaneously. The process is as hard as learning a foreign tongue, which is best acquired by making good use of textbooks in the country where the language is spoken. An horizontal sense may be well developed by a study of the principles of counterpoint, combined with practical exercises in well-directed listening. For the ambitious music-lover it is a very vital matter, for of all the requisites of true listening this is the most neglected, owing, no doubt, to the fact that we live in an age when vertical writing is more acceptable to the untrained ear. Most medieval music is unintelligible without the horizontal faculty, and much of the music written since the year 1600 cannot be fully enjoyed without it. Bach and Handel wrote freely in both styles. Haydn and Mozart, composers of patterned music, did not neglect counterpoint, as their sacred works plainly reveal, and Beethoven overflowed with the horizontal element. The romantic composers, and especially Mendelssohn, did plenty of tune weaving, while Wagner's operas contain a host of examples. Modern writers frequently write passages in

which the main interest is contrapuntal (horizontal), and the listener must be always on the look out for these.

It is evident, then, that throughout the whole course of musical history horizontalism asserts itself. There seems to be a growing tendency at the present time to give equal prominence to counterpoint and harmony, although some writers have gone a step farther by interweaving not merely melodies, but harmonic progressions;

Stravinsky—"Petroushka"



examples occur in Stravinsky's *Petroushka*, Holst's *Hymn of Jesus*, Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe*, Vaughan Williams's *London Symphony*, and Strauss's *Salome*.

Cultivating the Horizontal Sense.

Early training in the cultivation of the horizontal sense may be obtained by studying rounds, catches, and canons, and simple two- and three-part inventions; then comes the fugue, the epitome of contrapuntal design. The popular misconception that a fugue is dull and meaningless, and too severe in intention and structure arises only where there is ignorance of what the form really is. The word fugue indicates *flight*, a definition aptly describing the conduct of the initial basic phrase as it careers in elusive, hide-and-seek manner among the voices or parts. In a round, one tune proceeds continuously in each of the three or more parts, and at a fixed distance of so many beats or bars. Here we are always conscious of

what is going on, and can single out one voice and listen to it separately, or try the more difficult task of hearing in equal measure all the voices at once. In a fugue, however, once the work is under way the many repetitions of the main tune (or subject) are separated by fragments of other material, and it is harder, though more interesting and challenging, to watch their appearance and disappearance. The listener need have no doubts as to which tune is engaged in these hide-and-seek antics, since all fugues invariably open with plain, *unaccompanied* statements of the basic theme in one or other of the parts. It is obvious, therefore, that we must be agog to catch this tune from its first note, and, providing we absorb it, we are almost sure to know the composer's intentions. So that we may be fully prepared for the initial phrase, it is not uncommon for a *prelude* to precede the fugue proper. Now, let us suppose that we have reached the point where the subject of the fugue has just been announced: no sooner has the last note finished than the *same* tune (or a slight modification of it) is repeated by *another* voice, at an interval of a fourth or fifth lower or higher, the first voice continuing with a suitable counterpoint in the meanwhile. Two voices are now at work, the one having announced the subject, and embarked on new ideas, the other having answered. By this time the remaining two, three, or four voices are itching to take part, but they must enter in an orderly manner, one by one, just as the second voice entered, namely, after the previous voice has completed an announcement. In every case a voice proceeds to weave a fitting counterpoint when it has accomplished its prime purpose of announcing the basic theme, there being no rests or periods until all parts are engaged. Although the careful listener can always say when the exposition of all parts is complete if he

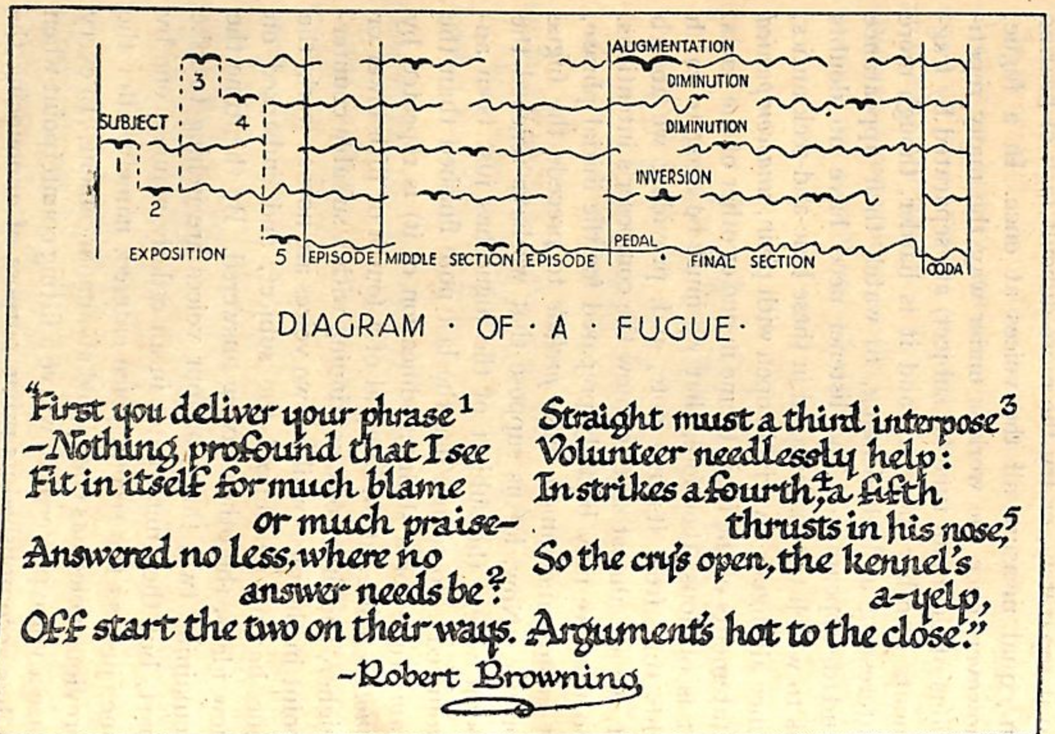


DIAGRAM · OF · A · FUGUE ·

knows how many voices there are to come in, there is nothing in the general trend of the music to suggest it, for an important characteristic of the fugue is its continuous movement, without break or halting-place, from beginning to end. We may compare it to a seamless garment of fine texture, or to a waterfall lit up by varied colours.

Fugal Devices.

As soon as every part has announced its subject, the music continues on its course in whatever way the composer wishes. New ideas creep in and weave themselves around fragments of the opening tune; new keys are also explored for the sake of variety. When there are no complete repetitions of the subject in any of the parts this portion of the fugue is called an *episode*; this may happen once or many times, though the ear still detects no sections in the ordinary sense because the music flows on without break to the end. Sometimes the subject creeps in again, perhaps in different order, or the parts announcing the subject originally may now introduce an answer—there is no strict line of procedure. Often, though not necessarily, there is a "smoothing out" near the end, where each part has a final "say" in a similar manner to its initial entry. For the sake of interest, it is not unusual for the main theme to be treated by one of many devices once the exposition is complete. There is, for instance, the *pedal*, which is often used to intensify the excitement of the climatic point of the work; it consists of a low note, held on for a number of bars, while the remaining parts continue with the fugue. *Stretto* is another device, in which the tunes in the several parts arrive so quickly that they overlap. When the notes of the subject are shortened—perhaps halved or quartered

throughout—the process is called *diminution.* The reverse, the lengthening of the values of the notes, is called *augmentation,* and is more difficult to detect. *Inversion* is a complete presentation of the subject upside-down, the curve of the notes forming the melody being inverted.

Bach.

It requires to be made perfectly clear at this point that there is no fixed method of writing a fugue. As soon as the parts have made their orderly entries at the outset, the composer is at liberty to proceed exactly as his heart dictates. Bach, the pre-eminent fugue writer, who, by horizontal methods, suggested love and hate, gaiety and gravity, hope and despair, just as easily as Beethoven did by other means, had endless resources at his finger tips. By a strange misfortune he was forgotten when a new style of writing became more popular, and it was left to Samuel Wesley and Mendelssohn among others to rescue his works from oblivion a century later. But Bach is remembered not so much for his invention as for his perfection. Purcell, the Englishman, was busy on his best works when Bach was still young, and, whereas Purcell was among the first successfully to combine harmony and counterpoint, Bach was the first to bring this fusion to perfection. Bach's *Forty-Eight* (Preludes and Fugues) have been called the musician's Old Testament, just as Beethoven's *Nine* (Symphonies) have been called the musician's New Testament, and this collection is not only of great value musically, but is a landmark in the history of keyboard composition. Its sub-title announces that the contents are for the "well-tempered clavier" (which may have been either the clavichord or the harpsichord). It was tuned (or tempered) by Bach on a new

system; the old method, while acoustically accurate, did not admit of modulations into certain keys without ill effects, whereas "equal" temperament, though scientifically inaccurate, caused all keys and key-changes to sound in tune. The latter method is essential to all music (except the deliberately archaic) written since that time.

Modern Fugues.

Listening to fugues demands much of the listener, and, while it is recommended that Bach and Handel should be studied in the first place, it should be remembered that many modern works in this style are well worth attention. Elgar, Holst, and Bliss—all British composers—have written compositions of fugal texture. Lord Berners has produced an amusing fugue with a serious exposition, but with growing touches of humour as the work proceeds, and with a startling conclusion.

HINTS AND EXERCISES BASED ON CHAPTER IV

1. The use of gramophone and wireless is strongly advised in connection with a cultivation of the horizontal sense.

2. A few suggestions—

(*a*) Hear plenty of canons and rounds, and note the number of beats between the entries of the parts.

(*b*) Hear some Handel choruses, such as are to be found in *Messiah*.

(*c*) Begin listening to two *different* tunes proceeding simultaneously by solving Percy Scholes's "camouflaged tunes," to be found in Books 2 and 3 of *Great Musicians* (Oxford University Press).

(*d*) Hear some of Bach's *Two-part Inventions*, especially Nos. 1, 4, 8, and 10 in the Augener edition of the 15 *Two-part Inventions*.

(*e*) Seize every opportunity of hearing fugues for organ and clavier by Bach.

(*f*) Study closely, with the aid of the score, "And With His Stripes" from Handel's *Messiah*. Consult Prout's *Fugue* and

Fugal Analysis (both published by Augener) at the same time, as these books contain an analysis of this chorus, though they are inclined to be too technical for the beginner.

3. Printed scores are great assets to horizontal perception, and should always be used when possible.

4. Since fugues, to be fully understood, need to be heard over and over again, the value of gramophonic aid cannot be over-estimated. The following fugues have been particularly well recorded—

Bach: *Fugue in E-minor* (Organ).
Prelude and Fugue in A-minor (Piano).
Toccata and Fugue in D-minor (Organ).
Liszt: *Prelude and Fugue on B.A.C.H.* (Organ).

and, in lighter mood—

Berners: *Fugue in C-minor* (Orchestra).
Templeton: *Bach Goes to Town* (Dance Band).

As a pleasant diversion, the recording of Bach's *Toccata and Fugue* (above) might be compared with a further recording of an orchestral transcription of the same work. Many interesting problems will at once present themselves.

5. Other works of a fugal nature—

(*a*) Bach's *B-minor Mass.*
(*b*) Scarlatti's *Cat Fugue.*
(*c*) Mozart's Overture to the *Magic Flute.*
(*d*) Beethoven's String Quartets, Op. 18, No. 2 (Final Movement), and Op. 59, No. 3 (Final Movement).
(*e*) Prelude to Act 3 of Wagner's *Mastersingers.*
(*f*) Prelude to Puccini's *Madam Butterfly.*
(*g*) Smetana's *Bartered Bride* Overture.
(*h*) Fugue from Weinberger's *Schwanda the Bagpiper.*
(*i*) Elgar's *Introduction and Allegro for Strings* (part of the *Allegro* section).

6. Study carefully Vol. II of the *Columbia History of Music.*

CHAPTER V

LISTENING TO PATTERN MUSIC

The Bachs.

For many people, the name *Bach* signifies but one person, the composer whose works were discussed in the previous chapter. Two centuries ago, people referred not to *Bach*, but *The Bachs*, one of the greatest families of musicians that ever lived. Grove's *Dictionary* gives two pedigree tables of this line of Germans, consisting of 51 names—not all musicians, of course—but as many as 37 bound up in some way with the musical art. The earliest date to appear in the table is 1561, and the latest 1845; for nearly 300 years, therefore, the Bachs were engaged in this noble work.

Movement away from the Horizontal Style.

John Sebastian Bach (1685–1750), with whom we have already made acquaintance, was far and away the most important figure in the Bach family, although his third son, Carl Philipp Emanuel (1714–88), is, historically speaking, also an important person because he (in common with others) turned his thoughts in a new direction. John Sebastian's works reach the highest level of excellence in their own particular style, in spite of the fact that soon afterwards they were temporarily forgotten, probably because they close a great stage of musical development. Carl Philipp's contributions are elementary in comparison, yet their value lay in their anticipation of the tendencies of the next 150 years, wherein the giants of pattern music —Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven—perfected a new means of expression. By the irony of fate, the masterpieces

of a brilliant father were eclipsed by the efforts of his far less brilliant son. We do not have to look far for the explanation. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the horizontal method of making music showed signs of being played out. Palestrina, who wrote also in the vertical manner, had scaled the peaks of the style by his sacred writings a century earlier; the madrigalists practically exhausted the possibilities of secular vocal composition at about the same time, and had not instrumental composition been hampered by difficulties of mechanism, manipulation, notation, and so on, its heyday might also have been reached before the time of J. S. Bach. Keyboard music was feeling its way during the seventeenth century, and despite Bach's mighty organ and clavier fugues it tended to become substantially much less horizontal. So that by the time C. P. E. Bach began to write, horizontalism had taken second place. Counterpoint was inclined to be less an essential part of the musical thought, even in texture, and exacting upon the listener; it lacked clear rhythms, it was almost unintelligible when set to words, it gave little scope for thematic development (save in the fugue), it did not offer facilities for the use of balance, variety, and refined repetition as did the other arts, and did not appeal widely to the countryfolk, whose own music was so rich in metre and rhythm. We must not imagine that Sebastian himself was oblivious of these apparent defects: he too produced *chorales* or hymn tunes (chiefly for the benefit of the simpler worshippers), and he wrote harmonized versions of courtly and country dance tunes like Handel, Purcell, and the rest of his contemporaries. Thus it happened—as it does even to-day—that melodies devised expressly for dancing by a slow process of evolution became keyboard and instrumental pieces intended for

aural delight. These were grouped together and called *Suites*, the dances (or dance-like tunes) being sometimes in the vertical, sometimes in the horizontal style. The original village melodies were inclined to be gay, tripping, and care-free, whereas the ballroom tunes were slower, more serious, and not without a vein of artificiality. Of the former, the Galliard, Courante, Allemande, and Gigue (Jig) appeared frequently in the Suites, while the latter were represented by the Pavane, Sarabande, Minuet, and Gavotte. Later, dances of many nationalities were utilized and included. The grouping in each Suite was not altogether haphazard, but quick pieces followed slow pieces, and grave tunes alternated with gay ones. As a rule, the same mode, either major or minor, was maintained throughout.

The Suite.

As might be expected, the Suites were a most popular form of composition. Their simple outlines and short, well-defined phrases (akin to the lines of a poem) proved a superficial attraction that is sought by would-be music-lovers of all ages. But the more skilful composers saw great possibilities in the extension, elaboration, and artistic arrangement of these plain ideas into patterns of a highly complex nature.

C. P. E. Bach.

It was at this time that Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach came along. He did not invent anything particularly new, but he gave prominence to a form of keyboard music that had been tried already, but with varying degrees of success. That he attempted compositions with an horizontal tendency we know to be true, but he confessed he found fugues, canons, and so on dry and dull, and

lacking in sweetness and clarity. More as a diversion than a serious effort to compose, he produced a number of *Sonatas*, as they were called—pieces to be *sounded*, as distinct from *Cantatas*, pieces to be *sung*; these he cast into a special mould, simple but well thought out, and to his surprise his ideas spread in a manner he scarcely anticipated, with the result that he was regarded as the founder of a style on which the works of the next important musical era was based. Subsequently, composers gave more attention to the *form* or pattern of their larger compositions.

Musical Form.

Now, it is often said that the study of formalism is a danger, if not a hindrance to the music-lover. In a sense this is true, for it is a paradox that the more we learn of form the fewer works do we discover obeying the so-called "rules." Like the fugue, every formal work is a pattern unto itself, and seldom akin to another in minute details of construction. Yet, it is impossible to follow intelligently a large work without slight knowledge of musical architecture. Musical form is musical sense, and is best learned by experience, which is a lengthy business. The keen listener may discover for himself that composers present their ideas in orderly sequence, and he may also consult text-books for confirmation and further enlightenment; after all, this is the slow road to understanding and appreciation. It is easier to accumulate a few broad facts in the first place, and then continue in a spirit of lively anticipation.

The Basis of Form.

Form is the handmaid of all art, music being no exception; too often do we imagine it to imply nothing more

than logical *arrangement* of musical ideas. A study of the classics, however, reveals the overwhelming importance of tonality or key. This will become evident later in the chapter, where a change of letter in the pattern formulae represents not merely change of melody, but temporary change of key. Not until music emerged from the contrapuntal period was the development of form possible, for rhythm (in its modern sense), and with it cadence (or the rounding off of phrases by certain progressions of chords, either audible or implied), then began to assume positions of great significance. A musical thought which begins and ends in the same key sounds complete in itself, but this very completeness tends to isolate it from other thoughts to which it might well be linked. In order, therefore, that a work containing a large number of small ideas may be well and truly constructed, it is necessary for many phrases to end in new keys, keys either closely or distantly related to the originals, so that fresh fields may be opened up for continued development. It will be seen how vital this question of tonality becomes in the construction of a movement. One of the characteristics of the classic period is that, in spite of frequent excursions into new keys, the listener rarely needs to pause to locate the original key of the movement. This, it has been argued, is a valuable asset in strong, coherent form. The romantic composers modulated rather more rashly, believing that the sudden distribution of tonality produced contrast in pitch, atmosphere, and colour.

Expansion from a Single Unit.

It will have been gathered already that the unit of musical form is the melodic, harmonic, or rhythmic thought, which may take the shape of a short phrase

or possibly a complete "sentence." By skilful arrangement of new and contrasting ideas, a musical pattern comes into being. The phrase is the unit for the sentence, the sentence the unit for the section, the section for the movement, and the movement for the work. Constructive success depends upon many factors, one of which is the intensification of a thought by apt preparation and consequence, and the movement towards a point of climax by means of ceaseless waves of emotion. Symmetry and asymmetry also play their part.

Exact Repetition.

By calling our simple basic idea "A," we can trace out designs that composers have used by means of formulae, though the order here given is not necessarily chronological. In the first place, there is no reason why a worthwhile idea should not be repeated over and over again as it stands, except that a certain amount of skill would have to be exercised to prevent monotony. Actually, this device has been tried by a number of writers (mainly modern), and not without success. Percy Grainger is a

Grainger—"Shepherd's Hey"



case in point; in his *Shepherd's Hey*, the opening four-bar phrase undergoes twenty-four repetitions, and with no intervening material; interest is maintained almost entirely by varied instrumentation. The hackneyed *Bolero*

of Ravel is similar (curiosity being aroused by means of a fifteen-minute *crescendo* from *pp* to *ff*), while Holst is full of pure reiteration in his *St. Paul's Suite*. In these works the tune or upper part undergoes repetition, but there are also examples in which inner parts and basses are similarly treated. An examination of Arensky's *Basso*

Arensky—"Basso Ostinato"



Ostinato, Elgar's *Carillon*, and Cyril Scott's *Two Passacaglias* for Orchestra will provide instances of the latter device, whilst a good example of the former method is to be found in the Ostinato movement of *St. Paul's Suite*. Where there is a constantly recurring bass, the term *Ground* is often applied; where the idea moves from part to part we apply the term *Passacaglia*.

Now, if we look closer at the Holst Ostinato movement just quoted, we shall probably come to the conclusion that it is not so much a melody as a six-note rhythmic motif that proceeds unceasingly. Pure repetition of rhythm has, in fact, also been attempted, other examples occurring in the First Movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, and in the Finale of Wagner's opera *Valkyrie*.

Similarly, the repetition of harmonic phrases may be found in music; the Prelude to Wagner's opera *Rhinegold* is entirely built on one (broken) chord; two chords repeated four times each, then the whole eight played over and over again on eleven successive occasions may be found in the conclusion to The Miller's Dance in Falla's ballet *The Three-Cornered Hat*.

Falla—"The Three-Cornered Hat"



Inexact Repetition.

So far, we have seen that the most obvious method of expanding an idea "A," whether melodic, rhythmic, or harmonic, is by pure repetition, the formula being—

$$A - A - A - A - A - A \ . \ . \ . \ \text{etc.}$$

This is rarely used, except for folk-dancing.

A more interesting method of repetition, however, is that in which the initial idea is slightly varied as it proceeds, the formula becoming—

$$A - A_1 - A_2 - A_3 - A_4 - A_5 \ . \ . \ . \ \text{etc.}$$

The Variation.

This is, in effect, a scheme which is generally known as the *Theme with Variations*. We find early attempts of this pattern in the Suites. Handel, for instance, realized that a dance in two eight-bar sections was too short, so he sought out a tune worth expanding, and, in a first variation, added an extra note between each main note of the melody. In a second variation he would insert two notes between each note of his initial melody, and in the third three notes, and so on. Or, perhaps, he would vary the accompaniment, leaving his upper melody intact. His *Aria con variazioni* (better known as the *Harmonious Blacksmith*) is a well-known instance of a simple type of Variation pattern. There are, however, still earlier examples by Byrd, Bull, and Purcell, but the device

Handel—"Aria con variazioni"

Andante Un poco animato Vivace

PIANO

AIR VARIATION I VARIATION 3

became very popular in the time of Handel and Bach. Later on the classical composers considerably developed the form, sometimes to such an extent that wide divergences existed between the initial tune and its variants. Reference should be made to Haydn's *Emperor Quartet*, Mozart's *Pianoforte Sonata in A*, and Beethoven's Slow movement from the Fifth Symphony, First movement from the Pianoforte Sonata, Op. 26, and the thirty-three variations on the *Diabelli Waltz*. Still later, Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms used the pattern and introduced new devices; not only were liberties taken with the time, rhythm, tune, harmony, mood, and mode of the initial theme, but entire transformations of the spirit were cleverly effected. Some magnificent orchestral variations have been written in more recent times, as, for instance, the *Symphonic Variations* of Dvořák and of Franck, the *Enigma Variations* by Elgar, *Brigg Fair* by Delius, and *Variations on a Nursery Song* by Dohnányi; while the tone poem *Don Quixote* by Richard Strauss is so involved that it tends to carry the form almost beyond a logical conclusion.

Binary and Ternary Forms.

We have confined ourselves so far to the expansion of a single musical thought "A" externally. There is no reason why internal expansion should not be explored

by splitting the unit into two parts, the second part being a contrasting yet balancing complement of the first, thus—

$$\overbrace{a - b}^{A}$$

The contrast between (*a*) and (*b*) is effected more by change of key than by change of thematic material. (*a*) begins in the key of the piece (the "tonic") and moves to a new key (the "dominant") a fifth higher. In (*b*) the process is reversed, the opening key being the dominant, with a movement towards the tonic to end the piece.

This gives us Binary (Two-part) Form, which is quite common in short movements, and especially in songs. It is worth while to remember that balance is not necessarily achieved by making both parts of equal length (i.e. *halves*), but that in music, as in all forms of art, satisfactory balance is a matter of emphasis, a short well-stressed motif often carrying as much weight as a longer or larger motif of lighter character. By dividing up our original simple thought and introducing a balancing element (*b*), we have now arrived at a small compound idea, and, since unity has been partially destroyed, it has been found useful to revert to the initial part (*a*) and repeat it in order to round off the whole. This device gives us a far more common form of the simple pattern, for to our contrast and balance the elements of repetition and (partially restored) unity are added, and our new compound thought becomes—

$$\overbrace{a - b - a}^{A}$$

or Ternary (Three-part) Form, one of the most satisfying elemental designs in the whole realm of art. Its value cannot be over-estimated: instrumental movements long and short, complex and simple, ancient and modern, rely upon it fundamentally; the great majority of songs are

based upon it; in fact, it is often known as Song (or Aria) Form. Its three-fold construction offers opportunity for almost all the devices employed in musical architecture; the parts need not be equal thirds, nor need the contrasting section (*b*) be in the same key, rhythm, mood, or mode as (*a*), for it so happens that the more daring the adventures, the more joyous is the return home. Some little comment by way of a postscript is often added finally in order to form a definite conclusion: this is called the *Coda*.

Old Rondo Form.

Now let us take the compound idea (*A* – *B* – *A* – Coda) as our new unit and see how this may be expanded to form still more complicated patterns. Expand it internally, not merely by bald repetition (which would give a rather tame design *A* – *B* – *A*, – *A* – *B* – *A*, . . . etc.), but by preserving the main thought for purposes of repetition, and interspersing a *new* middle section in each compound thought as we proceed, thus—

A – *B* – *A*, – *A* – *C* – *A*, – *A* – *D* – *A*, . . . etc.

or, better still, so that we do not sicken of the preponderance of *A*'s—

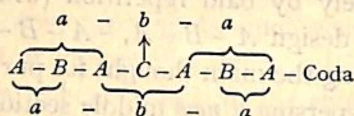
A – *B* – *A* – *C* – *A* – *D* – *A* . . . etc.

Here we arrive at a design much favoured by the early classics, and known as Old Rondo Form. The musical movement called the Rondo (*Fr. Rondeau*—a round) consists of repetition of an introductory theme, but with several contrasting subsidiary themes (in new moods and keys) interspersed. In practice there were seldom more than five or seven sections in all, the first and last section always being the same, and a coda added—

A – *B* – *A* – *C* – *A* – *D* – *A* – Coda

New Rondo Form.

For a concrete example we cannot do better than examine Haydn's popular *Hungarian* (*"Gipsy"*) *Rondo* from the Trio in G major, the scheme of which is: *A* (in the key of G major); *B* (G minor); *A* (G major); *C* (G minor and B-flat major); *A* (G major); *Coda* of a few bars in G major—i.e. five sections and a coda. Old Rondo Form is quite an interesting pattern and easy to follow, and though springing from Ternary Form, is not in Ternary Form itself. For this reason, therefore, it gave place to New (or Modern) Rondo Form, in which episodes or contrasting ideas were completely balanced, sections *B*, *C*, and *D* becoming *B*, *C*, and *B*. This produces a far more satisfactory plan, which is Ternary from two angles—



Because this improved design is much like another pattern (Sonata [First Movement] Form), which will be dealt with later, it is often referred to as Rondo-Sonata Form. A useful example of it occurs in the Finale of Beethoven's *Sonata Pathétique*, Op. 13. The Rondo is, perhaps, not quite so popular to-day as it was, though modern illustrations of it certainly exist, as, for instance, in John Ireland's *Sonatina* for piano.

Originally, the rondeau was a choral dance performed in a circle, the opening tune being a refrain, and the episodes being vocal solos. The pattern is also found in poetry, especially in France. The English poet, Austin Dobson, made use of it, chiefly for amusement, for example—

I intended an Ode,
And it turned to a Sonnet . . . . . A
It began *à la mode*, ... B
I intended an Ode; . . . . . A
But Rose crossed the road
In her latest new bonnet: C
I intended an Ode:
And it turned to a Sonnet. . . . . . A

Now let us return to our compound musical idea *A – B – A*, take each of its three components separately, and expand it into Ternary Form, thus—

A – *B* – *A* – Coda.
a – b – a *c – d – c* *a – b – a* – Coda.

Minuet and Trio Form.

This gives a pattern closely resembling the classical Minuet and Trio, a movement originating from a short-stepped dance from France. When it was previously incorporated in the Suite it was a graceful measure in two eight-bar sections, but now it became quicker and longer, though its three-beat-to-the-bar rhythm was preserved. Subsequently, in order still further to lengthen the piece and give more variety, a second Minuet was added, and being scored thinly (often in three-part harmony) it became known as the Trio. By the time Haydn was writing his sonatas and symphonies, the form was established thus—

a – *b* – *a* – Coda.
|: *A* :||: *B – A* :|| |: *X* :||: *Y – X* :|| |*A* || *B – A*|| – Coda.
FIRST MINUET SECOND MINUET, OR TRIO FIRST MINUET

which, with the repeats fully written out, becomes—

A – A – B – A – B – A – X – X – Y – X – Y – X – A – B – A – Coda,

i.e. sixteen short sections arising out of four small ideas.

The Scherzo.

Though used extensively by the classical composers, the pattern rarely changed its form, but its *character* became less and less like that of the dance from which it originated. The Trio tended to lose its three-part harmonies (though it was still scored less heavily than the other sections), and it was usually in a contrasting key. The stateliness slipped away, giving place to gaiety and humour, and by Beethoven's time its celerity and jocularity were transformed almost beyond recognition. Consequently, it assumed a more fitting title, namely, Scherzo, literally meaning a jest or joke. Occasionally, small alterations were made in its presentation, as, for instance, when Beethoven seemed so delighted with the Trio in the Quartet, Op. 131, that he returned to it and the opening section before reaching the Coda, the design becoming—

SECTION *A* – TRIO – SECTION *A* – TRIO – SECTION *A* – CODA

The corresponding movements of his Fourth and Seventh Symphonies are similarly constructed.

Some attractive Scherzos have been written more recently: Mendelssohn's fairy-like creation in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* music is a Scherzo, but not in Minuet and Trio form; some of Schumann's movements are outstanding; Chopin's piano Scherzos win attention by their grandeur; while Elgar's Second Symphony has a vivid third movement, Rondo in form, Scherzo in character. We might note in passing that the Minuet and Trio form is used in countless marches and dances, as well as drawing-room ballads.

Sonata [First Movement] Form.

And now let us return to our internal expansion of Ternary Form, and subdivide the three parts not into

fresh Ternary schemes, but into two-part or Binary designs, except for the middle section (*C*),

$$\underbrace{A}_{a-b} - B - \underbrace{A}_{a-b} - \text{Coda.}$$

A – *B* – *A* – Coda.
a – *b* – *B* – *a* – *b* – Coda.

Compare this with the formula for New Rondo Form on page 68. It is the same but for the middle section (*A* – *C* – *A*). Instead of this (which represents two repetitions of the initial tune with a new episodical tune between), let us substitute something quite new (in that we have not heard of it before) yet familiar (since it bears reference to the material already given, i.e. "*a* – *b*"). The object of this step is to preserve the principles of unity *through* contrast. Our pattern is now—

A	–	*B*	–	*A*	– Coda.
a – *b*		New aspects of *a* and *b*		*a* – *b*	– Coda.
STATEMENT		DEVELOPMENT		RESTATEMENT	

which is a rough approximation of our final and most difficult design, namely, Sonata (First Movement) Form. Sound musical knowledge and a well-trained ear are necessary before it can be fully appreciated, therefore each section must be treated here in greater detail.

(A) Statement.

This is frequently preceded by an Introduction—especially in Symphonies—which, like the prelude to a fugue, fixes the key and mood, and invites attention to whatever follows. The Statement proper opens with an announcement of the principal tune "*A*," clearly presented and repeated perhaps more than once, so that the listener may have every chance of remembering it. Sundry phrases of minor importance form a link with the second

thought (or group of thoughts) "*B*," which is likewise clean and concise in its presentation. Parts "*A*" and "*B*" are contrasted in mood and key: often the one is strong, rhythmic, and surging—masculine, in fact—and the other tender, graceful, and curving—more feminine in character. To round off the section a little coda (or Codetta, as it is called) is added. Here the printed score shows a double bar, and the composer gives directions for a repetition from the beginning (with the exception of the Introduction).

(B) Development.

Now the composer can, if he chooses, show his constructive skill, for he is open to express his individuality without restriction, and in a way unknown in the previous designs we have studied. His two themes, like the hero and heroine in a drama, become involved in a plot. Complications may be piled one upon the other, anxieties may arise, and the excitement increases. The surge of the music shifts from key to key, and all the artifices of invention and thematic development (see pages 14–19) are employed. Finally, we are led back to the

(A) Restatement,

where "*A*" and "*B*" reappear in their former guise. The misunderstandings are smoothed over, the intensity dies down, and the drama ends with a fitting epilogue or Coda. So that the conclusion is on the same plane as the beginning, the themes are wedded into one and the same key—the tonic key of the movement—and the characters stand out in greater relief, our acquaintance with them having ripened as a result of our journey with them through many vicissitudes.

A fuller formula of the pattern now follows—

	a –	*b* –	*a*	
	STATEMENT	DEVELOPMENT	RESTATEMENT	
Introduction.	*A*. First Theme. (Connecting phrases.) *B*. Contrasted Second Theme (Codetta.)	Adventures of *A* and *B*, with possible additions of new matter.	*A*. First Theme. (Connecting phrases.) *B*. Second Theme (now in the same key).	Coda

This, roughly, was the general plan of Sonata [First Movement] Form as used by the classical composers. Then (and since) many liberties have been taken with the design, with the result that in some instances it is not easy to identify the customary line of action beneath the surface. In any case it is important to remember that great composers do not set out to obey fixed laws and customs, but that generalizations (which we can call "laws" if we like) have been made by students, and from these are deduced the formulae, which are really mere approximations. The complete list of forms appears on page 74. Note especially that a new alphabetic symbol in these formulae always denotes change of melodic outline. It may also denote change of key, mood, mode, rhythm, or instrumentation. Rarely does it represent change of time, or complete change of style.

Types of Musical Works.

These, then, are the chief designs found in classical works, and by "works" we mean combinations of various movements psychologically arranged to carry the listener through a complete cycle of human experience. Such cycles were labelled differently, according to their instrumental arrangements, even though they were all very much the same in architectural construction. It was the custom to call the pattern for one or two instruments a *Sonata*. (This must not be confused with the type of

THE MAIN CLASSICAL PATTERNS REDUCED TO FORMULAE

The Simple Musical Idea (A)

1. EXTERNAL EXPANSION

(*a*) *By Pure Repetition.*

$A - A - A - A - A - A$ . . . etc.

(*b*) *By Varied Repetition.*

$A - A_1 - A_2 - A_3 - A_4 - A_5$ . . . etc. – (A)

} THE VARIATION AND THE GROUND BASS

2. INTERNAL EXPANSION

(*a*) *By Contrast.*

$A - B$ — BINARY FORM

(*b*) *Repetition with Contrast.*

$A - B - A$ — TERNARY FORM OR ARIA FORM

} SLOW MOVEMENT FORMS

The Compound Musical Idea (A-B-A-Coda)

1. EXTERNAL EXPANSION

(*a*) *By Repetition.*

$A - B - A - C - A - D - A$ . . . etc. (Coda) } OLD RONDO FORM

(*b*) *Repetition with Contrast.*

(above: a – b – a)

$A - B - A - C - A - B - A$ (Coda)

(below: a – b – a)

} MODERN (SONATA) RONDO FORM

2. INTERNAL EXPANSION

(*a*) *Subdivision into Ternary Form.*

a – b – a

$A - B - A$ (MINUET) $C - D - C$ (TRIO) $A - B - A$ (MINUET) (Coda)

} MINUET AND TRIO, AND SCHERZO FORM

(*b*) *Subdivision into Binary Form.*

a – b – a

$A - B$ (Codetta) DEVELOPMENT $A - B$ (Coda)

} SONATA (FIRST MOVEMENT) FORM

movement called Sonata [First Movement] Form; to avoid this, it might be wiser to use the term First Movement Form, especially as the pattern frequently comes first in Sonatas, Symphonies, etc.) Piano Sonatas are very abundant, though many Sonatas have been written for Violin and Piano, 'Cello and Piano, Flute and Piano, etc. Poulenc, the French composer, has written a Sonata for Clarinet and Bassoon! A Sonata for two similar instruments (e.g. 'Cellos) is often called a *Duo*. The same kind of work for three instruments is called a *Trio*, for four instruments a *Quartet*, for five a *Quintet*, and so on. Where the combination consists solely of strings, it is usual to specify by calling it a stringed work; thus two violins, a viola, and a 'cello form a String Quartet. A Quintet might consist of strings and piano, or any other group of five instruments. A Sonata for Orchestra is called a *Symphony*, while a Sonata for any solo instrument and orchestra is a *Concerto*. In a work like Mozart's Bassoon Concerto, therefore, we hear the bassoon prominently, together with the interplay or the accompaniment of an orchestra.

The Complete Cyclic Work.

A cyclic work like the Sonata and Symphony must contain at least two movements, one of which is in Sonata [First Movement] Form. More often, however, there are four movements, the key of the first and last being the same (this occurred in the Suite). Because the several movements constitute a unified work of art, it is usual for the composer to maintain a certain uniformity of style throughout. Classics are said to consist of pure or absolute music, i.e. music complete and satisfying in itself apart from reference to external events or ideas. The order of movements and the use of patterns is not fixed,

but the writer disposes his parts to maintain a maximum of interest. Experience shows that the most customary order of movements is—

1. A quick movement with an intellectual bias (in Sonata [First Movement] Form).

2. A slow movement, simple, lyrical, and expressive, with a simpler design, such as Ternary Form.

3. A short, quick, rhythmic section inclined to appeal to the physical side of our nature (in Minuet and Trio Form).

4. A quick, arresting movement forming a grand finale, either in Rondo Form, Variation Form, Fugue Form, or simplified Sonata [First Movement] Form.

The connection between the cyclic work and the Suite may not at first be apparent, though the one developed from the other. There is, however, a relationship between the slow movement and the solemn Sarabande, the dance section and the French Minuet, and the finale and the Jig or else the Rondo. The only pattern claiming no affinity is Sonata [First Movement] Form, which was a survival of the French form of the Overture as introduced by Lully about 1650. (See the chapter on Opera.)

Modern Developments.

We generally associate Sonatas and Symphonies with the classical composers, even though these moulds have continued in use ever since, and are still used to-day. Not many radical changes have been made in outline, but the content and the spirit of the music have progressed with the spirit of the age. One or two developments cannot be overlooked: the Symphonic Poem—an orchestral work in one long movement, and with a literary basis—was a product of the "Programme Age." The

Phantasy Form, of more recent origin still, came about owing to the imaginative element running riot at the expense of the formal element. Fantasias, Phantasy Quartets, etc., are usually in one movement, which is really a compressed version of the cyclic form.

The Concerto.

Because the Concerto is the only large pattern which gives unusual scope to the soloist, it is, and always has been, presented in a slightly different manner from the Symphony. Three movements, and not four are customary, the short dance section being omitted. A new feature, however, is often present in the shape of the *Cadenza*—a florid solo passage giving opportunity for executive skill. Most of the familiar Concertos exemplify in their opening movements a form different from that of the Symphony. In the Symphony, the Statement section is sometimes repeated (see p. 71); in the Concerto the Statement is repeated, but not in the same way. The full orchestra announces the two subjects in abbreviated form, after which the solo instrument enters (accompanied by the orchestra) and repeats the basic material somewhat more fully. Unless the listener is prepared for this, he may find the opening movement of the Concerto somewhat confusing. Double and Triple Concertos have been written for more than one soloist; such works allow of interesting "dialogue" passages between the soloists, as well as between the orchestra and the soloists.

The Classic Composers.

We now turn to the three masters of classic writing in order to discover what contributions they made to the art of music generally. Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven strove incessantly to express their individualities more

clearly, and in so doing the forms they adopted advanced nearer towards the ideal. They were never content merely to imitate what had gone before—there is no such thing as stagnation in the realm of Art. Their inventions extended in many directions, but in the works of all three composers there is always that strong sense of key to which reference has already been made. When Haydn first began to compose, the unit of musical thought was short, crisp, and elemental—much like the themes of the Croatian folk dances he knew so well—consequently, his movements are comparatively small and easy to comprehend; but by the time Beethoven entered the field, ideas had grown in breadth and intensity, and new and endless opportunities for emotional and thematic development became possible.

Haydn.

Joseph Haydn, born on the borders of Lower Austria in 1732, died in Vienna in 1809, wrote simple, happy, highly contrasted music, decorated in a particularly charming manner, as was the fashion of the day. Short, rhythmic phrases were the raw material of his designs, but he extended and elaborated them until they lost much of the elementary squareness they originally possessed as dance tunes. An example of how he wrought and fashioned commonplace ideas may become clearer by poetic analogy: compare

The curfew tolls the knell of day;
The herd winds o'er the lea;
The ploughman homeward plods his way,
And leaves the world to me.

with

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day;
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea;
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

It will be readily noticed that the second stanza differs not only by virtue of the number of syllables to each line, but that it is just as beautiful a picture as the first is crude and uninspired. Haydn has been called the "father" of instrumental music partly because he organized structure, and partly because he developed the individuality of each instrument of the orchestra for which he wrote. His work covered most of the emotional experiences of mankind, though he was prone to emphasize the sunny side of life. Humour he had in plenty: in the *Farewell Symphony* the performers quit the platform one by one till all have disappeared; in the *Surprise Symphony* a thunderous chord suddenly appears in the middle of a quiet slow movement "to make the ladies jump!"; his *Ten Commandments* contain a tune stolen from Martini for the eighth section ("Thou shalt not steal"); and all kinds of uncanny sounds (including an out-of-tune tin trumpet) are heard in the *Toy Symphony* for strings and baby toys. So happy was Haydn when composing that he rarely spent his time doing anything else, consequently his output is enormous. Among a host of other works he wrote no less than 104 Symphonies, 83 String Quartets, 51 Concertos, 70 Trios, and 58 Sonatas. His most significant contributions to music are the Symphonies, the Quartets, and the Oratorio, *The Creation*.

Mozart.

Wolfgang Mozart, born at Salzburg 1756, and died 1791, has been called the greatest natural musical genius who ever lived, for, at the age of five, he began to play and compose! His style is more polished than Haydn's. Every note mattered, and, as a result, his compositions are clean and clear, even to the uninitiated listener. Mozart used conventional phrases and ideas as units for

his works, but he took trouble to present them in ideal form. That his expression is deeply sincere there is little doubt. Unlike Haydn, Mozart could command all types of composition successfully. The crisp dance figures that Haydn utilized were taken by Mozart and drawn out into lovely lyrical tunes, an advance in craftsmanship which earned for him the title of "music's first classical melodist." His work is smoother, serener, more flexible, less carefree. His harmony, form, and orchestration are more refined. He ornamented his melodies with "graces" (i.e. trills, shakes, turns, etc.) in a most charming manner; this device was not unusual in his time, of course, since the pianoforte had not yet become a popular domestic instrument, and this was the only method of prolonging notes upon the harpsichord. Like Haydn he worked hard at his art, and in a short lifetime produced a great deal of music: 40 Symphonies, nearly 60 Sonatas, many Concertos, Chamber Music, Operas (including *Don Giovanni*, *Figaro*, and *Magic Flute*), and a fine Mass are included among his output. His importance as a composer of operas has not altogether been realized. By a strange stroke of fate, Haydn—a comparatively poor man—died in comfort and splendour, whereas Mozart—born of good lineage—died a pauper!

Beethoven.

Ludwig van Beethoven, born at Bonn 1770, died at Vienna 1827, is regarded as the greatest composer of all time because he not only brought the ideals of his immediate predecessors to a point of perfection, but paved the way to a remarkable degree for his successors. His music strikes a deeper note than that of any other writer, and shows a fuller understanding of the human mind than any before or since. He made form his servant,

not his master, and to such an extent that the later works (particularly the Quartets) are utterances so broad and deep that they scarcely contain themselves, bursting all barriers of design and shifting from mood to mood as the soul of their master dictates. Beethoven is at one with the trials and troubles of mankind. Indeed, his own life was drowned in sorrow, and in his immortal masterpieces, he offers some solution to the incessant problems of a humdrum world. His influence was, and is, world-wide, extending far beyond the realms of his own art. Because he contributed in generous measure to the great wave of humanitarianism that swept the world during his lifetime, Beethoven is numbered with the elect of the ages. He wrote less than Mozart or Haydn, chiefly because he was never satisfied with his efforts: his sketch-books reveal how he shaped his ideas over and over again, his longer works often taking years to complete. His 9 Symphonies are imperishable: his 17 String Quartets will always calm men's troubled minds; his Sonatas, Concertos, and Overtures defy the ravages of time. Undoubtedly his instrumental works rank highest. There are a few songs, and one opera—*Fidelio*—but these are not always acclaimed as masterpieces. The really great vocal work is the *Mass in D*.

Beethoven's death just over a hundred years ago marked the end of the purely formal era. Many composers (Brahms, to name only one) have written on classical lines since that time, though not without being affected by the new spirit of romance which Schubert, Weber, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Chopin, and many others introduced. The story of this movement, common to all the arts at this period, is reserved until the next chapter.

HINTS AND EXERCISES BASED ON CHAPTER V

1. In order to prevent this chapter becoming inordinately long, the *Suite* was given somewhat scanty treatment. The most important dances are therefore outlined here—

ALLEMANDE—4/4 time: a moderately quick dance of German origin; in two sections, each repeated.

COURANTE—3/4 or 3/2 time: a French dance, rather brisk in character, with at least one of the parts running or flowing in quavers.

SARABANDE—3/4 or 3/2 time: originally a slow, stately, Moorish dance.

GIGUE (JIG)—in many kinds of time: very lively, even rollicking; invariably at the end of a suite.

GAVOTTE—either 2/2 or 4/4 time: an old French dance, moderately quick.

MINUET—3/4 time: a graceful dance of moderate pace.

BOURRÉE—4/4 time, yet two beats to the bar: a vigorous French dance.

PAVANE—2/4 time: a slow and stately Italian dance.

GALLIARD—usually 3/4 time: a lively French dance; this, as well as *all* the foregoing, is in two-part or Binary form.

HORNPIPE—4/4 time: an old British sailor dance; merry and bright.

POLONAISE—3/4 time: a moderate, dignified Polish dance; varied forms.

MAZURKA—3/4 time as a rule: Polish, and like a quick waltz.

POLKA—a round dance in 2/4 time: probably Bohemian, animated; usually in three-part (Ternary) form.

WALTZ—3/4 time: unknown origin; perhaps German (when it was slow), then speeded up by the Viennese; two-part and three-part form.

BOLERO—3/4 time: a Spanish dance.

MARCH—4/4 time: square and rhythmic; often with an introduction, coda, and subdued trio.

When various examples of these dances have been heard, some effort should be made to identify further pieces. Much more might have been said about the several characteristics, but the listener is invited to make his own investigations. Apart from form, rhythm is, of course, of outstanding importance: not only the rhythm of pulsation and pace (depending upon time-signatures and speed terms), but the rhythm of phrase-lengths, decided by the extent and the disposition of the phrases over the system of measured bars.

2. What patterns form the basis of the following pieces?

(a) The introduction to Beethoven's *Egmont* Overture.
(b) Debussy's *Hommage à Rameau.*
(c) Purcell's song, *I Attempt from Love's Sickness to Fly.*
(d) Ravel's *Pavane for a dead Infanta.*

3. The popularity of the Suite seems never to have waned, though many examples—both classical and modern—differ considerably from the early types in that they are not collections of dances, but groups of short pieces brought together for some reason other than to form a cyclic work. Thus the incidental music to a play may be arranged into a suite, as in the case of Grieg's two *Peer Gynt* suites; or the outstanding numbers of a ballet may be re-sorted for the same purpose, as, for instance, in Falla's *Love the Magician.* Here follows an assorted list, which should be heard, and the origins discovered where possible.

Bach's *French* and *English* Suites.
Handel's *Water Music* and other Suites.
Grieg's *Holberg Suite.*
Tchaikovsky's *Casse-Noisette.*
Bizet's *L'Arlésienne.*
Debussy's *Suite bergamasque.*
Ravel's *Mother Goose,* and *Daphnis and Chloe.*
Stravinsky's *Petroushka,* and *Fire Bird.*
Falla's *Three-Cornered Hat.*
Holst's *The Perfect Fool* (Ballet Music).
Elgar's *Wand of Youth* and the *Nursery Suite.*
Walton's *Façade.*
(Suites 1 and 2.)

4. These further examples of the forms mentioned in this chapter deserve close study—

EXACT REPETITION (RHYTHMIC, MELODIC, OR HARMONIC).
Järnefelt's *Praeludium.*
Ravel's *Rapsodie espagnole* (Prelude).

THEME WITH VARIATIONS.
Arensky's *Variations on a Theme of Tchaikowsky.*
Bizet's *L'Arlésienne* (Prelude).
Rachmaninov's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini.*

OLD RONDO FORM.
Bach's *Violin Concerto in E* (Finale).
Haydn's *Trumpet Concerto* (Finale).
Mozart's *Horn Concerto* (K. 447) (Finale).

MODERN RONDO FORM.

Beethoven's *Sonata for Piano, Op.* 28 (Finale).
Mozart's *Sonata in D for Piano* (Finale).

MINUET AND TRIO.

Berlioz's *Minuet of the Will o' the Wisps.*
Bizet's *L'Arlésienne* (Minuetto and Menuet).
Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin* (Menuet).

SCHERZO.

Beethoven's *Symphony, No.* 1 (Menuetto).
Harty's *Irish Symphony* (Scherzo).
Litolff's *Concerto Symphonique, No.* 4 (Scherzo).

FIRST MOVEMENTS.

Prokofiev's *Classical Symphony.*
Walton's *First Symphony.*

(Care has been taken to see that these illustrations are all well recorded for the gramophone.)

5. An excellent exercise in identifying *pure melodic repetition* is afforded by John Ireland's *Pianoforte Concerto,* a work that may seem to be very involved on first acquaintance. The harmonic system is such that the reiterated melodies are skilfully hidden, and intensely concentrated listening is necessary before these melodies are disintegrated from masses of chords, and the simplicity of the work becomes apparent.

6. Say whether the following National Songs are Binary or Ternary in form—

"The British Grenadiers."
"The Vicar of Bray."
'The Oak and the Ash."
"Blue Bells of Scotland."
"Barbara Allen."
"The Minstrel Boy."
"The Last Rose of Summer."

7. Listen carefully to the following movements with a view to establishing their patterns—

Mozart's *Violin Concerto in A-major* (K.219) 3rd Movement.
Beethoven's *Sonata in A-flat,* Op. 26, 1st and 2nd Movements.
Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony,* 2nd Movement.
Beethoven's *First Symphony,* Finale.
Beethoven's "*Moonlight*" *Sonata,* Finale.
Schumann's *Arabesque* for piano.
Mendelssohn's *Songs Without Words,* No. 1.

Mendelssohn's *Hebrides Overture*.
Chopin's *Polonaise in A*, Op. 40.
Grieg's *Butterfly*.
Debussy's *Arabesque, No.* 1.

NOTE. Use a gramophone if possible. Hear the movement once or twice through first. Then single out the recurrent themes, representing them *on paper* as "A," "B," and so on. Finally decide whether the remaining material is new, or derived from other themes.

8. Which of the undermentioned movements ends with a Coda? Upon what material is the Coda based?

Haydn's *Trio in G-major*, Third Movement (Gipsy Rondo).
Beethoven's *Third Symphony*, 1st Movement.
Beethoven's "*Moonlight*" *Sonata*, 1st Movement.
Chopin's *Valse in D-flat*.

9. Study the Coda of Beethoven's *Coriolan Overture*; note how successfully it brings the piece to a close, and how a small wisp of melody persists to the end, though its speed and time-pattern change at each appearance.

10. Write an account of the construction of Dvořák's *Symphony From the New World*. Then make a comparison between the first movement of this work and the opening movement of Grieg's *Pianoforte Concerto*, paying special attention to the development sections.

11. Make a close study of Vol. III of the *Columbia History of Music*.

12. Read John Galsworthy's *Forsyte Saga* with a view to establishing a relationship between its structure as a literary work and the structure of a symphony.

13. Robert Browning's long poem, *The Ring and the Book*, is written on a plan closely resembling one of the musical patterns discussed in this Chapter. Which is it; and where are there points of difference?

14. Some or all of these books should be read—

Hadow: *Sonata Form* (Novello).
Harding: *Analysis of Beethoven's Sonatas* (Novello).
Grove: *Beethoven's Symphonies* (Novello).
Macpherson: *Form in Music* (Williams).
Macpherson: *Studies in Phrasing and Form* (Williams).
Morris: *The Structure of Music* (Oxford University Press).
Surette and Mason: *Appreciation of Music* (Novello).

CHAPTER VI

(PART I)

LISTENING TO ROMANTIC MUSIC

THE POETIC STYLE

EXCEPT for purely academic purposes, it is rather dangerous to label and categorize works of art according to the style or school to which they apparently belong. Technical terms are all very well in an exact science, but in art they are merely relative, and are bound to lose much of their significance unless handled with great reserve. Experts sometimes quarrel, for instance, over a given musical design, some believing it to be in Binary Form, while others argue it is Ternary. Often it is a matter of opinion, and we run the risk of being further contradicted if we say a work of art exemplifies the characteristics of any particular school of thought to the exclusion of all others, for the style of an artist depends very largely on the work of his immediate predecessors, and, if inspired, may predict in some degree the paths that his successors may follow. Gauguin once remarked that in art "there are only revolutionists and plagiarists," from which we gather that style is in a continual state of flux, and that practically every potent creation points backward and forward at the same time. In the previous chapter we looked upon Beethoven as the arch-classic. Now we shall see that he was also a romantic, for, while perfecting the old music he was also preparing a way for the new. He was no exception. When one mode of expression develops until it reaches a high level of excellence, newcomers in the field are always waiting to explore

fresh vistas. Beethoven himself, as we have already seen, found difficulty in expressing his ideas within the existing conventional patterns, especially in his later years, and some of his innovations inspired his followers to strike paths which eventually led to what is called the romantic movement. Roughly speaking, this movement spread over the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century. But it would be foolish to imagine that the element of romance cannot be found in music written before the year 1800, or after the year 1870.

The Meaning of Romance.

We have yet to investigate the meaning of the word *romance* as applied to music. The definition is as hard to limit as the period, although in a general way we use the word far more often (and more loosely) than the word "classic." For example, we can scarcely avoid it if we are discussing light literature: a love story and a romance are synonymous. We also speak of it when we are thinking of anything fanciful or fantastic. Much poetry is said to be romantic. We may mention it when referring to pictures and illustrations. Even our friends appear to display romantic traits at times. In fact, if anything is mystically beautiful, poetic, or idealistic, as distinct from the more formal and realistic, the word romance springs into our minds. Where the classic leaves us cold on some occasions, the romantic seems warm and rich and personal and intimate. Reverting to the arts, we find that painting and literature passed through romantic phases during the Middle Ages, after which classic ideals were again adopted for a space; it was during the romantic *revival* at the beginning of the nineteenth century that music entered the field for the first time. At this period poetry also changed in style, and Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* makes

the revelation by grouping the polished, conventional, prosy work of men like Pope, Collins, and Cibber in Book Three, while the fresh beauty and sympathetic emotions of Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats appear in Book Four.

This new spirit was not confined merely to Art. A wave of humanitarianism was spreading over the civilized world, consolidating society to an extent hitherto unknown. Rousseau pressed for social liberty to the exclusion of artificiality. The tyrannous aristocracy which aped Louis XIV's methods on a small scale, and which was bound up with feudalism and a pernicious system of caste, came to an end with the French Revolution of 1789, and henceforward human life assumed new values, while the men of genius—the painters, poets, dramatists, and musicians—imbued their work with deeper feeling. As Art always reflects the spirit of the age we must regard this change as inevitable. The stiffness and formalism began to disappear, a lust for novelty and freedom (affecting musicians no less than the rest of mankind) ran high, with the result that the methods of the past were overthrown so that a freer and simpler mode of expression might be established. Yet there is no definite dividing line between classic and romantic music, for new arts—like new ways of living—do not alter in the course of a day, but grow gradually, incorporating fresh ideas, but retaining nevertheless certain fundamentals, without which the art would perish.

The Transitional Stage.

Because the process of revolution is slow, there is a considerable amount of music that can only be described as *transitional*, some with a classic bias (i.e. romantic in flavour, but not altogether freed from convention), and some with a romantic bias (i.e. classic in form though

saturated with fancy). The former are inclined to be meditative, philosophical, and therefore objective and impersonal; the latter smack of poesy, are more akin to Nature, more subjective, more concerned with content than form, and appeal therefore to the imagination rather than to the intellect. Extremes of each type occur in the works of Bach on the one hand, and Tchaikovsky on the other. But, beyond the transitional works, there is a vast store of music which is truly romantic, and the very titles of the pieces suggest the new spirit in which they were written. The severer Symphonies, Sonatas, Quartets, and Concertos, though not altogether dropped, make way for Nocturnes, Reveries, Ballads, Impromptus, and Barcarolles.

Reasons for the Change.

In order to understand the fundamental differences between the new music and the old we must first of all remember that the inevitable march of progress affected certain factors beyond the innovations of the actual composers. The makers of instruments made discoveries which not only brought about easier playing, but purer tonal qualities. Harpsichord, clavichord, piano; horns, trumpets, and clarinets—members of the orchestra which hitherto enjoyed somewhat subdued team work—sprang into prominence by assuming important solo parts. A reorganization of the orchestral forces also became possible, each section now forming a complete choir in itself. New instrumental combinations were also tried out, giving scope for wider varieties of tone colour. But colour values of another kind were introduced by the composers themselves, new harmonies—many of them chromatic—being freely used to form fresh and unexpected tints. Melodies and rhythms became more independent, and

changes of key crept in with a frequency and daring that would have astounded the staid composers of the classic period. *Rubato*, a device which admits of certain flexibility in the tempo and rhythm, was a further innovation. Above all, there was a tendency to write shorter pieces—brief, lyrical movements resembling songs without words—the intention being to give exalted phases of a single experience rather than a complete cycle of human feeling as in the classic symphony.

The Influence of Beethoven.

The preliminary signs of all these changes may be traced in the work of Beethoven, who so early as the Third (*Eroica*) Symphony foreshadowed methods that were afterwards adopted by the romantics. Mystery, and a feeling of awe again occur in the Fifth Symphony between the third and final movements; for a number of bars the work seems held up, and the music appears to melt into thin air. The Sixth (*Pastoral*) Symphony is not only akin to Nature: every movement is so labelled that there can be no question but that it is an open-air picture. Further instances of this romantic vein from piano and other works could easily be found. Yet we must never lose sight of the fact that Beethoven was primarily a classic, and we have to search elsewhere for the first out-and-out romantic composer.

Schubert.

And so we come to Franz Schubert (1797–1828), one of Beethoven's younger contemporaries who spent his life in musical Vienna, and who showed a remarkable genius for spontaneous composition at an early age. Like Beethoven he wrote symphonies, sonatas, quartets, trios, and other long works, but in most cases the romantic

element came first and the form second. He was a lyrical writer *par excellence*, and it is in his songs (of which there are over 600) and shorter instrumental pieces to which we look for the outpouring of his energy, passion, and fancy tinged with sadness. The songs are little masterpieces, revealing full understanding of the poems in the lovely tunes and skilfully suggestive accompaniments. Schubert always wins affection by his seductive melodies, hypnotizing rhythms, and colourful harmonies. He was one of the most prolific of composers, for, considering his short life, his output was considerable; but his works are not all of the same high standard. Whereas Beethoven laboured over his compositions, Schubert worked with such great rapidity and facility that it is said he failed to recognize one of his own songs a few days after he had written it.

Mendelssohn.

In Felix Mendelssohn (1809–47), a German Jew, we have a Classic-Romantic: classic by training, and by admiration for the neglected Bach; romantic by virtue of his affinity with Nature, and his desire to write picturesquely. Stern preludes and fugues appear side by side with fairy gambols, lonely seascapes, and trudging pilgrims in the list of his works. His Nature sketches are not imitations nor actual representations of outside things, but delightful excursions in sound, which by subtle suggestion call up images he has in mind. It would be an exaggeration to say that familiarity with Mendelssohn breeds contempt, and yet the more we know his works the more we recognize in them stereotyped melodies, harmonies, and key-changes, which verge on monotony, and are, therefore, apt to pall. Evidence of this may be found in the *Songs Without Words*—that collection which in

Victorian times (when Mendelssohn was in the heyday of his popularity) graced the top of every cottage pianoforte. If Schubert's finest works are his songs, then Mendelssohn is at his best in his Overtures, where his weaknesses are momentarily forgotten amid charming flights of imagination. But he wrote important works in all the forms except opera; and his symphonies, concertos, and the oratorio *Elijah* are not likely to be forgotten.

Weber.

Carl Maria Weber (1786–1826) is another German composer we cannot overlook. It is sometimes said that he gave birth to the romantic school, and in many ways this is true. His innovations in opera were responsible for a renewed interest in a form of art which had long been artificial and conventional through adherence to the obsolete Italian models. To give an example: in *Der Freischütz* (The Marksman) the plot is tender, mysterious, and supernatural; the melodies and harmonies are haunting and colourful; and the orchestration is unique since it introduces magic noises, imitations of natural sounds, and novel instrumental combinations. Moreover, the libretto contains spoken dialogue—a further novelty for a work of this type. This opera, together with one or two overtures, are landmarks in the history of musical development.

Schumann.

Robert Schumann (1810–56), originally a pianist, wrote music highly flavoured with romance. Charming melodies, luxuriant harmonies, pregnant rhythms (often treated in a surprising fashion), and allusions to people and places to which he wished to draw attention, are characteristics of his art. He is at his best in pianoforte composition,

and unfortunately, many of his more ambitious instrumental works sound like transcriptions from original piano settings. His orchestration tends to be ineffective. His invention is manifest in his shorter pieces, many of which contain patterns of his own creation. A mechanical device for improving his keyboard technique injured his hand, however, otherwise he might have been a virtuoso all his life, and musical literature would, indeed, have been the poorer. He believed firmly in the value of printed musical criticism, and was, in fact, the first prominent musical journalist. The briefest account of Schumann would be incomplete without mention of Clara Wieck, his "ideal wife." In 1840, the year of his marriage, he began writing songs—over a hundred in all—which reveal a new aspect of his lyric genius, and add much to his reputation.

Brahms.

The line of German romanticists is a long one, but one strand of it came to an end with Johannes Brahms (1833–97). Unlike his forerunners, he was not given to writing many short lyric pieces (except songs). In his quiet, unassuming way he tried to epitomize the best qualities of romanticism in the classic forms. Out of the lyric came forth the epic. It is not surprising, therefore, that his circle of admirers is smaller than that of Schumann, or Schubert, or Mendelssohn. His works are not so easy to enjoy at first hearing: as with Beethoven, his idioms and mode of craftsmanship require preliminary understanding, after which it is but a short step to complete appreciation; whereas a superficial listener may find him dull and heavy. Brahms was at home with all types of composition, including symphonies (four in all), overtures, concertos, choral works, songs and piano music.

Chopin.

Frederic Chopin (1809–49) stands alone. Though he was a Pole, his father was French, and most of the latter part of his life was spent in Paris. He wrote almost exclusively for the pianoforte, the peculiar qualities of which he explored and understood better than anyone before him. The literary bias in the works of Schumann was a sign of a new aspect of romanticism generally known as pictorial or programme music, but Chopin's use of blurred chromatic chords (intensified by skilful use of the sustaining pedal) pointed to an even later phase of romanticism known as impressionism. Both developments receive attention in later chapters of this book. But Chopin resembles Schumann by being most successful in the writing of miniature compositions, and less successful in designing larger works. A third of all he wrote consists of dance forms: the Waltz (a Central European dance then becoming rapidly popular) and the Mazurka and Polonaise (Polish national dances) were used as bases for new pieces meant for hearing and not dancing; he took them, robbed them of their four-square character, and translated them into pure poetry. His Preludes, Scherzos, Sonatas, and Impromptus are known to all pianoforte virtuosi. Even his Studies are musical—they are more like sonnets than technical exercises. Of his Nocturnes, modelled on a new form invented by the Irishman, John Field (1781–1837), the comments of Keeling are worth quoting: "The Irishman plucked a bunch of field flowers, daisies and buttercups twined with sweet honeysuckle and wild roses; their beauty was their fragrance and their childlike simplicity. The Pole took the flowers and fostered them in the hothouse of his morbid imagination. When they came forth once more they were exotics of rare and wonderful beauty, but they

had lost their innocence." Whether folk and national tunes should be subject to reincarnation by cultured musicians has always been a debatable point: Chopin, however, seems to provide a very convincing reply to the question, and in so doing reminds us that he was one of the first nationalist composers, in addition to being one of the first impressionists.

This brings us back, by another path, to the subject matter of Chapter III, where we traced the growth of nationalism from the folk tune. The two other strands of romanticism—pictorialism and impressionism—remain to be studied, and we shall see how men like Liszt, Berlioz, Wagner, Franck, Tchaikovsky, and Elgar all belong to the romantic school in its many phases, for romanticism, like classicism, is still with us, but as it is nearer in point of time its influence is if anything felt more strongly.

HINTS AND EXERCISES BASED ON CHAPTER VI
(Part I)

1. When next visiting a picture gallery, try to discriminate between classical and romantic paintings.
2. Compare Books III and IV of Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*.
3. Make a list of romantic musical titles, e.g. *nocturne* and *reverie*.
4. Learn by heart some famous romantic themes from the great composers, beginning (say) with the second tune in the First movement of Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*.
5. Study some of Schubert's songs. Read the words first of all; then listen hard to the accompaniments, being on the look-out for descriptive touches.
6. Make a point of hearing some of Tchaikovsky's music. Then proceed to Elgar's works.
7. Study the *Columbia History of Music*, Vol. IV.
8. Books to read—

   Mason: *The Romantic Composers* (Macmillan).

   The Oxford History of Music: Part IV, "The Romantic Period."

(PART II)

LISTENING TO ROMANTIC MUSIC.

THE PICTORIAL STYLE

Many people have been drawn to a serious contemplation of the musical art by the varied pictorial effects which colour certain compositions: given a *Valse Triste*, a *Danse Macabre*, or even a *Till Eulenspiegel*, they are as keen to probe the tonal mysteries therein as they are anxious to arrive at solutions to difficult picture-puzzles. Such experiences are not harmful, for they may lead to the unconscious acquisition of habits of concentration that make music of a more absolute nature easier to understand. Because music is so fleeting, so intangible, many listeners confess themselves unable to grasp it in the same way as a picture, a poem, or a play; but when the composer associates his work with a story, or indeed with anything definite outside itself, the problem seems to vanish, and the process of listening is reduced to a search for imitative and suggestive devices. This is why children find in pictorial music a source of great delight; melody, harmony, and rhythm may be attractive in a vague sort of way, but when the juvenile imagination is fired by a story told in terms of sound, the appeal is stronger, the added interest being enough to set the mind working with renewed vigour.

The Pictorial Age.

Between the years 1830 and 1850 this childish frame of mind revealed itself in large numbers of adult listeners, with the result that there was a general demand for music with a literary basis. It is easy for us to-day to belittle these people, though it is hardly fair to do so before we know the true facts. It must be remembered that at the

end of the eighteenth century art was a luxury enjoyed principally by the gentry—the people as a whole being unacquainted with the world's masterpieces until the beginning of the twentieth century. During the interim the process of transference was slowly taking place.

Berlioz and Liszt.

The French Revolution not only brought to the masses the desired "liberty, equality, and fraternity," but it hastened the industrial epoch, as well as a democratic battle for the capture of art. But, because the enjoyment of art demands a certain degree of culture, and not every one was fitted to appreciate the luxury, there was an outcry for a less intellectual type of music, simpler than the patterned forms of the classics, simpler than the atmospheric expressions of the poet-musicians. If music, like the paintings of the Dutch School, magnificently illustrated tales and events, then its function in life would be manifest. Two composers, Berlioz and Liszt, stepped into the breach and introduced a method of pictorial suggestion new at the time, and easy to understand. The novelty gained rapid popularity, with the result that a mass of music, some of it full of silly imitative tricks, was produced. Without realizing it, these men opened up a distorted form of romanticism, and incidentally were the heralds of the Programme Age.

Early Attempts at Pictorialism.

Actually, however, the imitative possibilities of music had been known, and partially explored, centuries before. Professor Niecks deals exhaustively with the subject in his book *Programme Music*. He points out that natural phenomena were portrayed musically as early as the sixteenth century. Thunder, warfare, bird calls, and bells

are easily represented, and a primitive example appears in the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book*, where John Mundy (1550–1610) contributes a *Fantasia* describing fair weather, lightning, thunder, and a clear day. Occasional touches of tone-painting occur in the works of Byrd, Dowland, and Monteverdi. In 1667 Adam Krieger wrote a four-part vocal fugue "entirely imitative of cats" on a chromatic subject, and set to the words *Miau, Miau*! But



BELL EFFECTS



MUSICAL-BOX EFFECT

one of the most famous early efforts is the *Six Bible Sonatas* of John Kuhnau (1660–1722), where familiar scripture stories are put into music: *The Combat between David and Goliath*, for instance, depicts the passage of the stone through the air by means of a rapid scale and some twirls. Niecks rightly says that these sonatas are powerful attempts rather than satisfactory achievements in external portrayal.

Pictorialism by the Classics.

In the first half of the eighteenth century Bach, Handel, Rameau, and Scarlatti all indulge in pictorial representation, though only in a limited degree. While Bach is not afraid to write an occasional (though untypical) piece based wholly on a definite incident, like the *Capriccio on the Departure of his Very Dear Brother*, Handel only employs programme effects in the accompaniments of his choral works, as in the oratorio *Israel in Egypt*, where frogs leap, flies buzz, hail pelts, and darkness enshrouds—the rhythms or the orchestration providing the realism. Later on we find Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, in spite of their absolute principles, stooping to actual portrayal when the spirit moves them. Like Handel, Haydn reserves his tone-painting for choral works, various touches in *The Creation* and *The Seasons* being particularly vivid. Beethoven declared with his own lips that some of his works were founded on non-musical ideas: apart from those sonatas and symphonies which bear distinctive titles, there is *Fury over a Lost Penny, vented in a Capriccio*, and the *Egmont*, *Coriolan*, *Leonora*, and *King Stephen* Overtures. Practically all the romanticists depict actualities at times, indeed, the nearer we come to the Programme Age, the larger the number of programmists, and the more difficult it is to define what is pictorial and what is not. If we accept Nieck's view that every piece of music that is not absolute is programme then barely any composer can be excluded, but if we narrow down the meaning to the actual imitation of natural sounds, the number is more limited.

The Symphonic Poem.

There is no substantial difference between the products of the Programme Age and similar music written earlier,

except in the form of presentation. The more ambitious examples are moulded upon a new form known as the *Symphonic Poem*. The customary thematic material of the symphony is replaced here by *motto themes*—tunes representing persons or things around which a story is woven. Thematic development is employed as in the symphony, but it is governed by the course of the story; and usually the motto theme continues to the end of the work, which is in one continuous movement, the form being governed by the events in the narrative. Of the three early programmists, Berlioz, the Frenchman, was the first to use the motto theme; his skilful manipulation of the orchestra was an added asset, and in his *Symphonie Fantastique* we have one of the most remarkable pictorial works in existence. More systematic workmanship occurs in the eleven tone poems of Liszt, yet he is not regarded so favourably as Berlioz. In this country his *Les Préludes* receives most attention. Wagner, the third of the group, worked out his ideas in opera, and will therefore be discussed later.

Later Pictorialism.

The end of the first half of the nineteenth century marks the end of the opening phase of the Programme Age. Much pictorial music, including a number of important symphonic poems, has been written since. Among later essays are the works of the Frenchman, Saint-Saëns (1835–1921), who from some points of view may well be styled a late classic, but who, strange to say, tried his hand at no less than four programme works of large proportions, as well as others of smaller calibre. The Dance of Death (*Danse Macabre*) easily heads the list in order of popularity, owing perhaps to its quasi-grotesque character. Death dances were gruesome, medieval practices

of religious origin, and were often chosen by fifteenth century painters for pictorial subjects. The music consists of a waltz sprinkled with novel and rather cheap effects. The other symphonic poems are *Le Rouet d'Omphale* (Omphale's Spinning Wheel)—a study in feminine seductiveness; *Phaeton*, a story showing how Jupiter averted the destruction of the earth; and *The Youth of Hercules*, a legend in which immortality is the reward for choosing the path of virtue.

The Belgian composer, César Franck (1822–90), wrote four symphonic poems, one of which—*Les Djinns* (The Evil Spirits)—based on a poem by Victor Hugo, resembles Saint-Saëns's death dance. Dvořák and Smetana, the Bohemian composers, also wrote a number of programme works, heard rarely however nowadays; some of Tchaikovsky's symphonies are Russian tone poems rather than absolute music; and *Scheherazade*, a colourful work founded on *Arabian Nights*, is one of Rimsky-Korsakov's best-known orchestral pieces. A few contemporary British composers have made use of the pictorial element, though there are not many pure symphonic poems of importance. Certain imitative touches are to be found in Holst's *The Planets*, Vaughan Williams's *The Lark Ascending* and particularly the *London Symphony*, and Elgar's *Cockaigne* (In London Town) and the *Enigma Variations*, but the outstanding work of symphonic proportions is Elgar's *Falstaff*, a character study of the Falstaff of "Henry IV." There are also a number of other continental composers who cannot be overlooked; Mossolov, Ravel, and Honegger have each written a piece inspired by the noise of machinery. *The Music of Machines* by Mossolov attempts to describe the actual din of an iron foundry; *Bolero*, by Ravel, though consisting of a number of repetitions of a Spanish dance, owed its origin (so the

composer says) to a visit to a factory; and Honegger's *Pacific* 231 represents (*a*) the sounds of an American long-distance locomotive as it gathers speed, and (*b*) the exhilarating feelings of the passenger as the train reaches its maximum acceleration. Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* is a recent (1936) amusing orchestral fairy tale for children, in which a narrator introduces the characters (by motto themes) while the orchestra develops the plot. Finally, there is the German arch-pictorialist, Richard Strauss (b. 1864).

Richard Strauss.

The seven massive symphonic tone poems of Strauss are generally accepted as masterpieces of their type. They are full of wonderful orchestral colour, clever motto-thematic development, and deft horizontal interlacing. *Don Juan*, the earliest of the seven, narrates musically the escapades of this notable Spaniard as given in Nicolaus Lenau's poem; the amorous adventures and eventual death are well depicted, while the feminine victims are represented by two exceptionally beautiful melodies. The next poem is *Macbeth*, a dramatic piece, but the least popular of the seven. *Death and Transfiguration*, a powerful sketch of the mental agonies of a dying man, and of the happy release of his soul, follows; the struggle between life and death, the deliriums, the last feeble heart-beats, and final triumph are drawn by a masterly hand. Perhaps *Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche* (Till Owlglass's Merry Pranks) is the most musical of the seven. We are introduced to the German fourteenth century hero the story of whose tricks and drolleries still give delight in Germany, much as the good deeds of Robin Hood of Merrie England give pleasure here. When the programme is known it is not difficult to detect Till's ride on

horseback through a gathering of market-women; Till, the cavalier, making love in vain; and the rogue's capture, trial, and execution. How Strauss adds an epilogue and prologue; how the theme representing Till undergoes melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic metamorphosis, and remains in one key despite the key of the rest of the piece; and how amusing the manner of the hero's end—these are easier to hear than describe, but they tend to prove that this is one of the cleverest and most musical symphonic poems ever written. *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, the next of the series, calls for even keener listening, if its programme is to be followed. It is founded on Nietzsche's philosophy of the development of the human race from its origin, and contains religious and scientific references. The majority of concert-goers find it too hard a nut to crack. In *Don Quixote* we return to an ancient romance. The adventure of the windmills, the charge into a flock of sheep, the assault of the pilgrims, the ride through the air, and the combat with the "Knight of the White Moon" —are a few of the events treated musically. Finally, there is *A Hero's Life*, which is in six parts, (1) the hero, (2) the hero's opponents, (3) the hero's helpmate, (4) the hero's battlefield, (5) the hero's works of peace, and (6) the hero's flight from the world. Part four contains a realistic battle-scene, and it is equally suggestive of man's struggle for artistic freedom. There is little doubt that the hero is Strauss himself.

On completing the seventh of the series, Strauss turned to opera, and for some years carried out his ideals in that medium, producing *Salome*, *Electra*, *The Rose-Cavalier*, etc., after which he returned to pure orchestral music and imitation with his *Alpine Symphony* (a "personally conducted Cook's Tour!").

Strauss, without a doubt, is unusually clever, subtle,

and a master of the style in which he chose to express himself. His love of humour and his anxiety to attain realism at all costs have plunged him quite rightly into a sea of destructive criticism. It is a pity that he did not try to exercise his talents, while still a young man, outside the realm of programme music. Nevertheless, he will go down in history as one of the great masters of the resources of the orchestra.

Two Kinds of Pictorialism.

From this brief survey of the growth of pictorial musical representation, it will have been gathered that there are two main types of programme music. (1) Musical sounds in no sense *exactly imitate* external events or things, though they can *suggest*, while the imagination is left to supply the rest. (2) Musical sounds can arouse *emotions* similar to those experienced when such events or things are *realities* (and not mere images within our consciousness). For instance, (1) when Strauss in *Don Quixote* causes the orchestra to appear to bleat like sheep, we know that we are listening only to a clever imitation, and that if we were blind, the inglorious instrumental chaos he produces would never convince us that we were in a market and not a concert hall. Our imagination must assist, otherwise the reference to sheep would not enter our heads. And yet (2) in Honegger's *Pacific* 231 we are introduced to the excitement of high-speed travel, not by imitations of the sound of wheels on the iron way, the rush of coaches through the air, nor the shrill whistle of the engine, but by a reproduction of the stimulus we might easily experience when travelling ourselves. This emotion would cause a train of images and associations to pass before our mind's eye.

The Value of Pictorialism.

Programme music is, after all, one of many styles of composition, and as such forms but a small section in the vast field of musical literature. To enjoy it as the composer wishes we should be prepared for it by knowing the programmes or stories beforehand, otherwise it might prove meaningless. Not that such pieces depend entirely upon their programmes for success, for all music irrespective of style should be clear, well constructed, and inspired, but this particular type may be easily overdone and debased, especially when the composer strives for close imitation, even at the expense of art and craftsmanship. And beyond knowing the programmes we must know the motto themes, together with the persons or things for which they stand, else the metamorphosis to which they are subjected may mean nothing to us. Lastly, if we assume an ideal attitude towards the art of music, believing it to be a language of the emotions, we are bound to conclude that pictorial representation is not the highest form of expression because it depends upon, and in some cases replaces literature. The painter does not waste his time *copying* Nature, thereby replacing the camera; in studying it he may make rough sketches for after use; but his lasting work is the result of observation and inspiration, for in it there is a spiritual message which he can only convey by means of colour and form. Good programme music is interesting, clever, and sometimes artistic, but at its best it lacks the power of absolute art in that it fails to transport us to those higher spiritual spheres to which the great masterpieces often waft us. Many a music-lover first made contact with the masters *via* programme music, and for that reason alone we cannot afford to despise it.

HINTS AND EXERCISES BASED ON CHAPTER VI

(PART II)

1. Some programme works worth hearing—

(i) Balfour Gardiner's *Shepherd Fennel's Dance.* Based on a story called "The Three Strangers," from Thomas Hardy's *Wessex Tales.* At the christening party of her second daughter, Shepherdess Fennel arranges for the guests to enjoy themselves alternately singing and talking, and dancing. The dances must continue for a quarter of an hour, she decreed, but Elijah, the parish clerk ("who had thoughtfully brought with him his favourite musical instrument, the Serpent"), and the boy fiddler "quite forgot the injunctions in the excitement of their position," and continued "till the hand of the well-ticked clock at the bottom of the room had travelled over the circumference of an hour."

(ii) Borodin's *In the Convent*: a pianoforte fragment in which is heard the cloister bell, the procession of the nuns to prayer, the strains of the chapel organ, the return of the nuns, and the curfew at sunset.

(iii) Debussy's *Children's Corner Suite*: (*a*) Dr. Gradus ad Parnassum—sundry distractions during the music lesson; (*b*) Jumbo's Lullaby—back again in toyland!; (*c*) Serenade for the Doll; (*d*) Snow is Dancing; (*e*) The Little Shepherd—a toy shepherd, of course!; (*f*) Golliwog's Cake Walk.

(iv) Dukas's Symphonic Scherzo—*The Sorcerer's Apprentice.* In his master's absence, the lazy apprentice bewitches a birch-broom, compelling it to draw water from the neighbouring stream. All goes well until sufficient water is fetched, when the boy forgets the magic words to stop the broom. Using brute force he chops the broom in two, only to discover that both halves proceed to draw water. But for the timely arrival of the master, the house might have been washed into the river.

(v) Ravel's *Mother Goose Suite.* (*a*) Pavan of the Sleeping Beauty; (*b*) Tom Thumb's Wanderings; (*c*) The Empress of the Pagodas; (*d*) The Conversations between Beauty and the Beast; (*e*) The Fairy Garden.

(vi) Saint-Saëns—*The Carnival of Animals*—an amusing zoological fantasia, containing imitations of lions, hens, wild asses, tortoises, elephants, kangaroos, fishes, donkeys, cuckoos, and pianists and fossils (a gibe at youthful musicians and their teachers!). Before the final "circus" there is also that lovely melody *The Swan.*

(vii) Sibelius's *Finlandia* and *Valse Triste.* The former is

an orchestral poem epitomizing the spirit of the Finnish race, while the latter (which is part of the incidental music to a play) depicts a dance between a dying woman and shadowy guests of the death chamber.

These are a few of the large number of modern programme works; there are so many more that a volume could be devoted to their descriptions, apart from commentaries on the methods by which pictorialism has been achieved.

2. Make a list of objects, etc., which lend themselves readily to musical imitation.

3. Learn by heart some "motto themes" from the greater Symphonic Poems.

4. Read Niecks's *Programme Music* (Novello).

(Part III)

LISTENING TO ROMANTIC MUSIC
THE IMPRESSIONIST STYLE

We have already seen that in the musical poesy of Nature and the open air we have the pure form of romanticism, the escape from artificiality and tyranny, and that in representation of legend and story we have pictorialism, inferior in many ways, yet an attempt to acknowledge the views of the great contemporary German and French philosophers and writers. In impressionist music, which may recall both natural phenomena and literary ideas (but in a different way), we see another strand of romanticism, where the methods of two groups of authors and painters emanating from Paris about the year 1880 were transferred to the art of music. The origin of this new means of expression begins with the founding of the Symbolists (a literary society), by Baudelaire, Verlaine, Mallarmé and others. The Symbolists set up in opposition to another group, the Parnassians, whose poetry they disliked because of its grandiose, high-flown style. Delicacy, grace, and subtle suggestion were to enter into the new literature, and if the exact meaning became so obscure

that it drew upon latent powers of imagination, so much the better, for readers would find pleasure in actively co-operating with the poet. In practice, it was intended that the word or the phrase should do the work of the complete sentence, i.e. *suggestion* would replace fully expressed thoughts, so that reading between the lines—or rather, guessing—would be involved. Thus, each Symbolist poem bore several translations, of which any one was as "correct" as another. Mallarmé himself said "To *name* an object is to sacrifice three-quarters of that enjoyment of the poem which comes from the pleasure of guessing bit by bit. To *suggest* it—that is our dream." Thus, as Percy Scholes points out in his *Listener's History of Music*, Vol. 3, impressionism is in direct contrast to programmism in that one is indefinite and the other definite, but they both rely on the power of suggestion, and on the fertility of the listener's imagination.

Aims of Impressionism.

Now Debussy, the French composer, took great interest in the work of the Symbolists, and eventually carried out their ideas in his own art. He was also attracted by the ideals of a group of Parisian painters, who called themselves Impressionists because they rejected classical allusions, literary suggestions, and historical references in their pictures, and painted sensuous impressions meant to influence the emotions rather than the intellect. Manet, Monet, Renoir, Pissarro, and Cézanne were some of the leaders of this particular school. The movement was no mere flash in the pan: it was the result of scientific research into two optical problems that had hitherto been overlooked or misunderstood. First of all, the eye being a lens can focus but one plane or distance at a time, everything else within vision being momentarily blurred

because it is slightly out of focus. Secondly, when the light which illumines a colour is varied in intensity, the colour does not change *tint* (i.e. become lighter or darker), but is transformed into new colours. Rightly or wrongly the Impressionists believed these facts, and put them into practice by (1) painting their scenes either entirely out of focus, or with the centre of interest clear and the remainder blurred, and (2) using the seven colours of the solar spectrum only, to the exclusion of black and white. Sometimes the colours were mixed on the palette before application, at other times two or more colours were placed side by side on the canvas so that the effect at a distance was approximately the same. (Turner, it may be remembered, tried both of these schemes.) Vagueness, delicacy, and extreme luminosity (cf. the Symbolists) were the result.

Debussy.

It was Debussy's aim to copy the poets and painters in the sister art by making musical sounds symbolic and suggestive, and melodies, rhythms, and harmonies vague and elusive, so that at the most the listener would have merely an impression of his intentions. To add to the illusion he chose picturesque titles (e.g. *The Submerged Cathedral*, *Goldfish*, *Gardens in the Rain*, *Mists*, *Reflections in the Water*, *The Sea*, and so on), around which the listener might weave his imagination, the music itself being little more than a bath of sound calculated to enhance the experience. Such music makes its deepest mark on a mind given to day-dreaming: here (for once) the listening should be passive rather than active, and if the eyes are closed during the performance, so much the better. It is apparent that impressionist music is far removed from the ordinary pictorialism, for Debussy

seldom attempted to tell a story—he was content to create an atmosphere. In Mason's *Contemporary Composers*, the work of Debussy is admirably summed up thus: "He gives us a title fitted to liberate our reverizing impulse. . . . Then he proceeds to establish the mood of idle reverie thus suggested by means of a tonal web which at no point detracts our attention by any definite features of its own, melodic, rhythmic, harmonic, or structural. All is floating, kaleidoscopic. Sustained melody is especially avoided, for nothing arrests attention or dominates mood like melody; we have therefore only bits and snippets of tune, forming and disappearing like cloud forms or eddies in smoke-wreaths. The rhythms are equally casual and indeterminate, often of exquisite grace, but obeying no law. The harmonies are surprisingly various—rich, clear, or clangorous, as the case may be; but always elusive, avoiding the definition that would impose thought rather than encourage fancy. . . . As there is little musical thought or emotion (melody), there is still less of that natural growth and combination of thought with thought which we call thematic development and polyphony. These are alien to this type of art, and are wisely avoided."

His Methods.

How Debussy used the musical material at his disposal in order to produce his filmy atmospheres is another story, and a long one. His harmonies (which are, or at any rate were, regarded as the most striking feature of his pieces) are often astonishing dissonances made up of intervals of seconds and ninths, and are repeated in consecutive chords while the damper pedal is depressed (cf. Chopin, "the first impressionist"). Moreover, he does not hesitate to use parallel octaves and fifths in succession—a harmonic crime that in his time was unforgivable. This partiality for

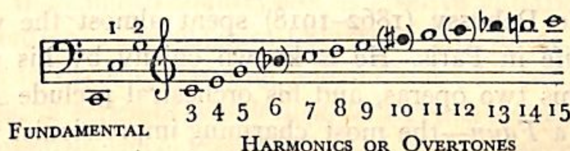
seconds, fifths, eighths, and ninths is neither accidental nor is it based on an arbitrary system of note relationships, but it is the result of a close acquaintance with the extraneous sounds emitted by bells. With one or two rare



DEBUSSY'S STRANGE CHORDS

exceptions, every musical note we hear consists of the note itself (the fundamental) plus a fainter cloud of notes of higher pitch (the harmonics or overtones) spaced at unequal distances apart, the highest being the closest. In bells the natural harmonics are unusually audible. Certain composers, notably Scriabin, have attempted to

THE SCALE OF HARMONICS



use these series of notes systematically; Debussy, on the other hand, occasionally resorts to them to produce special effects. Debussy's melodies (in his pianoforte works, at any rate) are inclined to be short and oft repeated, rather than long and sustained. Like the harmonies they sound

unnatural, chiefly because they arise from scale systems other than the common major and minor. Examples of modal, pentatonic, chromatic, and whole tone tunes abound in Debussy's music. At the time, the Church modes were almost forgotten, except in ecclasiastical circles; pentatonic and chromatic scales were indeed rare; and the whole-tone scale (consisting of six whole tones, e.g. C, D, E, F-sharp, G-sharp, A-sharp, C) was comparatively new, and, although colourful, becomes monotonous if too freely used. Debussy's rhythms display no startling innovations; conflicting rhythms are frequent, and, in order to be quite free, such time-signatures as 15/8 and 5/8 are employed occasionally.

If we are asked to consider whether Debussy's strange ideals, weird effects, and periodic "cacophony" are justified, we are bound to answer that they seem to have stood the test of time, and that when a composer is sincere, consistent, and unable to express himself by other means, he is at liberty to choose his own path. If we cannot at first understand him, or we misjudge him because our own outlook is narrow and confined, then we are indeed the poorer, and we should leave his work severely alone, or strive the harder to educate ourselves up to his standards.

Claude Debussy (1862–1918) spent almost the whole of his life in Paris. He is known chiefly by his piano works, his two operas, and his orchestral prelude *Afternoon of a Faun*—the most charming impressionist poem ever written. One of the operas—*Pelleas and Melisande*—is an epoch-making work worthy of close study. There is a fair amount of chamber music, of which the G-minor Quartet is outstanding. Debussy's association with Mussorgsky, the Russian, may have influenced his style.

Other Impressionists.

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937), another Frenchman, continued the style, but with a new technique. He is less vague and shimmering; he is often more concerned with form than idea. Debussy owed very little to the classics, but Ravel takes old forms like pavans, minuets, boleros, and waltzes, and out of them creates ingenious parodies. He resorts to imitative touches when necessary, as in the *Mother Goose Suite*, and Playing Fountains (*Jeux d'eau*), and may, therefore, be said to be more of a programmist.

Frederick Delius (1863–1934), the Englishman, is in many ways allied to the impressionist school; his works breathe deep romance, and are of high harmonic excellence. In fact, the harmonies and melodies seem inseparable—they are changing masses of tone which merge into each other like hues in a rainbow band. Sharp contrasts, giving rise to surprise and restlessness, he instinctively avoids. His biographer, Philip Heseltine, maintained that in Delius we have the most tranquil, the most kindly writer in what is perhaps the unsteadiest age in musical history. His representative impressionist compositions are not easy to select, for all his work is vague and atmospheric. *Brigg Fair*, which vibrates with the fresh, clean air of the English countryside, is a set of variations constructed on a Lincolnshire folk tune. Not all of Delius's music is British in feeling and outlook: an early life in Florida, a series of wanderings in Northern Europe, and a retirement since 1890 in France, were responsible for a style which is cosmopolitan rather than national. *Appalachia* derives from wisps of Negro melodies, *A Mass of Life* owes its origin to German philosophy, *Paris : A Song of A Great City* is self-explanatory, while some songs and an orchestral suite are definitely Norwegian

in flavour. There are two operas and a number of choral works.

Cyril Scott (b. 1879), another Englishman, displays a vein of impressionism. His more ambitious works are seldom heard, and are little known in England. His songs and short piano pieces at one time earned him the title of The English Debussy, but the appellation fits him in a strictly limited sense. He extended his characteristic harmonies to the refashioning of old national tunes (like *Cherry Ripe*, and *All Through the Night*), but not altogether with success: old tunes, like old plays, sometimes wear badly in modern dress.

Had he lived, William Baines (1899–1922) might have developed into one of the most eminent British impressionists. His few published pianoforte works indicate a style that might have rivalled that of Debussy or Scriabin, had it reached maturity.

Streaks of impressionism also occur in the works of Vaughan Williams, Frank Bridge, and Arnold Bax; while abroad the Polish composer Szymanowski deserves mention.

The Value of Impressionism.

The amount of impressionist music, like the amount of programme music, is comparatively small, so that too much importance must not be placed on its value. That it is a delightful escape from an overdose of intellectual listening goes without saying, but, in order to get the best out of it it is necessary to regard it passively, and not actively; to reverize, with the eyes closed, for preference; and, above all, to let the music work its charms and spells in its own way—not hindering it by deliberately searching for the magic it holds.

HINTS AND EXERCISES BASED ON CHAPTER VI (PART III)

1. It is strongly suggested that a study of musical impressionism should go hand in hand with a study of poetry and painting in the impressionist style.

2. Impressionist works worth hearing—

(*a*) Debussy's *Afternoon of a Faun*. This mythical creature, half goat, half man, wakens in the forest, only to recall a vague dream of Naiads plunging in the lake before curling himself up to sleep again.

(*b*) Debussy's *Submerged Cathedral*. A piano piece written around the old Breton legend concerning the sunken Minster of Ys. On clear mornings the cathedral is said to rise from the waves to the sound of bells and the chanting of priests.

(*c*) Delius's *In a Summer Garden*. "Roses, lilies, butterflies, bees, and shady trees. In a boat, almost hidden, two people. A thrush . . . and the note of a frog."

(*d*) Delius's *Paris*. An impression of a wondrous city at night.

(*e*) Respighi's *The Pines of Rome*. Outside of the walls of Rome are clumps of umbrella-shaped pine trees, whose needles make music in the breeze.

(*f*) Respighi's *The Fountains of Rome*. In this country, where fountains are luxuries rather than necessities, it is difficult to appreciate the joy of the traveller who comes unexpectedly upon a square, in the centre of which is a refreshing spring of water. Respighi sings the praises of the four most vital springs of Rome. (i) The Fountain of the Valle Giulia—at dawn. (ii) The Triton Fountain—mid-morning. (iii) The Fountain of Trevi—at mid-day. (iv) The Villa Medici Fountain—at sunset.

NOTE. The above notes do not represent programmes, so much as suggestions for the imaginative listener.

3. A romantic work of great loveliness is César Franck's *Symphonic Variations* for Piano and Orchestra. Try to determine whether it is poetic, pictorial, or impressionist; and then study the music carefully from the point of view of construction. Is it really a theme with variations?

4. Read—

Scholes: *The Listener's History of Music*, Book III (Oxford University Press).

Rutter: *Evolution in Modern Art* (Harrap).

CHAPTER VII

LISTENING TO MODERN MUSIC

Our brief survey of the growth of the musical art now brings us to comparatively recent times, for, by modern music, or, better still, *contemporary* music, we mean the works belonging to that new era which opened at the conclusion of the Great War.

Problems of Approach.

The problem of appreciating this music is difficult, since there is so much that is strange, complex, and apparently unintelligible, that we feel tempted to assume indifference, if not hostility, towards it after having repeatedly failed to understand and enjoy it. It is intensely disappointing and discouraging, especially for the student with some knowledge of the music of earlier times, to discover that there is no touchstone by which the music of to-day may be made clear and significant. Perhaps, it is consoling to remember in the first place that the most eminent students of musical progress confess themselves overwhelmed by some recent works of advanced character, and that the very composers are often unable to understand each other, especially when they are striving to reach their ideals by different paths. In addition, such a Niagara of music has burst forth into the world since the beginning of this century that the single student experiences great difficulty in keeping abreast with modern development in all its phases. Another point is that even the oldest music was modern when it was written, and some of it at any rate must have baffled the people who first heard it. We recall that Beethoven

and Franck both filled their contemporaries with alarm by the opening chord of a new and important work, while the ink spilled over the criticism of Wagner's operas half a century ago was enormous—far more than will ever be spilled over the Stravinskies and Schönbergs of to-day.

We all know how certain of our living poets, painters, and sculptors are treated by some sections of the community: still more do our musicians suffer, for, since a vital art can never stand still, and since music is the youngest of the arts, its development is the most rapid, and therefore the most elusive for a willing disciple. Although the artist may have obligations towards his art and towards his public, it does not follow that the people need have obligations in return. Thus it is not unnatural that the music which gives rise to misunderstanding may also be the means of generating abuse. But the earnest listener should guard himself against hasty judgment. In spite of what some critics may say, he should be patient and forbearing: he should be willing to admit that men who have succeeded in placing their work before the public may possibly be (to put it at the lowest) clever, and may even have a message to deliver, and that lack of comprehension may be due to his ignorance as much as to their complexity and obscurity.

Modern life, prompted by modern education, has opened our eyes to new possibilities in every line of progress. Science and Art have leaped rapidly forward, while their relationships one with the other have become more intimate. Terms and definitions that have hitherto led to a confusion of thought seem to have evolved new leases of life in this age of "modernism"—owing no doubt to the fact that artists have stressed ugliness at the expense of prettiness. Gradually, it is dawning upon a wider public that the *un*beautiful is undesirable, while the ugly, the

tragic, the terrible, and the bizarre are legitimate species of the beautiful, and though of sinister aspect, claim a place in art just as they do in life. We cannot deny their existence, but we can plead that they are kept within reasonable limits. The revolt against certain phases of modern sculpture is due to an excess of ugliness rather than to the mere presence of it, since little is done in some cases to compensate for the displeasure, pain, aversion, and even repugnance thus aroused. The architecture of the period of Blake's "dark Satanic mills" has assumed strength and pride in the new order; we now know that iron and concrete when used with skill are in no sense unbeautiful. Few painters are forever satisfied with the superficially lovely. A pencil drawing of a toad, a snake, or a witch may on occasion prove more moving than that of a beautiful woman. "Mars, the Bringer of War" (the first section of Holst's *The Planets*) excels in beauty, though not sweetness, the following section, "Venus, the Bringer of Peace," even although it is one of the most horrid, brutal pieces of music written.

Thorough Preparation Necessary.

In its passage through the ages music increasingly linked itself up with its externals. Already we have seen the fusion of music with literature beginning and becoming stronger during the nineteenth century. The twentieth century reveals attempts to fuse it with philosophy, theosophy, and other abstruse subjects, and it often happens that our appreciation varies directly with the extent of our knowledge thereon. If this be true, it follows that our preparation must indeed be thorough. We are not likely to go far with the assistance already given in this book; we must equip ourselves more broadly and deeply by reading and other forms of mental exercise.

For instance, we ought to cultivate an acquaintance with the outlines of social history, and especially recent European history; we ought to make a study of literature, including poetry; we ought also to promote clear thinking by solving problems in logical selection and arrangement, both general and purely mathematical—in fact, any occupation involving practice in keen, alert observation and precise listening is of the utmost value. And because music is a language the listener is better able to cope with the intricate problems of the art if he understands humanity at large and the joys of deep, sincere comradeship.

The musical changes that have taken and are still taking place make a sensible and logical approach to the subject difficult and hazardous. We are, as it were, in the midst of the revolution, and cannot watch progress from afar. Thus, nobody seems quite sure whether we have left the romantic age behind us or not. Some writers believe that music is entering new and unexplored avenues of romanticism, while others (with a finer sense of perspective) suggest that we are heading for three entirely new spheres, which they call: *Realism*, a step in advance of programmism; *Individualism*, a kind of personal impressionism; and *Anti-romanticism*, a movement eliminating feeling and emotion from music. Whichever of these views we care to take matters little, for the present state of affairs is fairly true of all stages in the growth of art, except that it is probably more vital and intense at the moment than it has ever been before owing to the chaotic condition of the world to-day.

An Analogy.

In order to understand the remarkable forces at work in the minds of modern composers, we might liken the history of music to the course of a mighty river, which

originally emerged like two trickling springs from the Church on the one hand and the simple peasantry on the other. In time these drew together and became one, while other streams (like tributaries) met the main current and were swallowed up. To-day, to our limited vision, the direction of the swollen current seems vague and uncertain; it appears to be subdividing like the arms of a delta, with some of the smaller channels diverging, perhaps never to meet again, while others seem to be making for the ocean—a new sea of sound—as yet dimly visible on the horizon. For all we know, this distant ocean may be but an inland lake from which fresher streams will flow; we cannot tell, for the influence of countless forces coming from every direction leads us to wonder whether all possibilities are well-nigh exhausted—whether the art has reached its limits. But we are, after all, small specks in the sands of time, and it may be that a thousand years hence our problems may pass unheeded by a people that has forged ahead beyond our wildest dreams. But to return. The stronger arms of the delta are those which receive the greatest impetus from behind. They resemble the composers who acknowledge the traditions of the past and expand upon them in the light of newer discoveries. The weaker arms rely upon their own powers; they resemble the men who forsake tradition, or even work against it, trusting that their honest efforts to create a new music may eventually reach fruition. The analogy brings to light the two categories into which all contemporary writers inevitably fall. Dr. Dyson's book *The New Music*, proceeds along these lines, and shows how Ravel, Delius, Ireland, and others clothe old-fashioned ideas in new harmonic garments, while Bartók, Schönberg, and a number of followers overthrow conventions in order to speak in idioms of their own creation.

New Paths : (1) Realism.

Now, the main purpose of this chapter is to investigate the fundamentals of music (melody, harmony, rhythm, and form) in the light of contemporary treatment, but before this it might be well to expand upon the three terms, Realism, Individualism, and Anti-romanticism already mentioned. Realism is used as a rule as an opposing term to classicism and romanticism; in classicism we see the weight thrust upon the abstract laws of design, whereas in romanticism form was dispensed with if it in any way hampered the outpouring of the spirit. Ideally, the romantic style was everything that could be desired, since it aimed at making music a language of the emotions; actually it fell short of the mark, partly because sentimentalism threatened to sweep it off its feet. This is where the movement towards realism began. It judged the sentimental to be as far from life and truth as the abstract, and beginning in a humble way with the higher forms of programmism, steadily fought for closer contact between art and human existence. Therefore, in common with the rest of the arts, music was used as a vehicle of expression for ideas connected with religion, philosophy, psychology, discovery, and so on. One of the early realists was Mussorgsky, the Russian composer, who tried to reflect everyday life, first in song, then in opera. His methods were imitated by Strauss (in his later life) and Puccini (in operas such as *Madam Butterfly*, *La Bohème*, and *Tosca*). A much fuller discussion of the style may be found in Dr. Hull's *Music: Classical, Romantic, and Modern*, which goes on to say that "Realism in music is of three different orders. There is the realism of the spirit . . . as with Mussorgsky; that of being realistic in effect, as with Puccini, Mascagni, and Leoncavallo . . .; and finally there is the use of the thing itself." The latter

type is subdivided into (1) actual imitation of musical sounds heard in Nature (birds, bells, etc.), and (2) reproduction of loud dins by "noise-machines," etc., to give the effect of hooters, blowers, taxi-horns, and so forth. This, Dr. Hull rightly remarks, carries realism to a *reductio ad absurdum*.

(2) Individualism.

Individualism (more often called Expressionism) is in direct contrast to Impressionism, the style we have already associated with Debussy. Instead of stimulating the imagination by *common* experiences, the Expressionist paints his *personal* experiences, which may, and usually do, differ from those of his fellows. Music is here used as a sort of spiritual camera, and the task of the listener is even greater than that of the composer. The experiment has already been attempted with varying success in contemporary painting, poetry, drama, and sculpture—the problems of interpretation being just as difficult. We have seen that realism is a transcription of the *external* world, and is therefore simpler than Expressionism, which translates the reactions of this world upon the inner self. Much of the apparently ugly music belongs to this category for the reason that we and the composer do not see eye to eye as to what is meant by beauty. Schönberg, the leading exponent of the cult, may give us more pain than pleasure in his works (such as *Pierrot Lunaire*) because we fail to appreciate and master his theories. A foreign language, either verbal or emotional, means nothing to us until we become familiar with it, until study, patience, and experience cause it to become second nature: Expressionism is such a language. We see later examples of the style in the work of Schönberg's pupils, in the orchestral poems of Scriabin, and in some of the compositions of the two

Englishmen, William Walton and Constant Lambert. Walton's nimble-witted *Façade*, a modern entertainment set to the poems of Edith Sitwell, is in its way an example of individualism; his Viola Concerto and Symphony are still better examples, but in a more serious vein.

(3) Anti-romanticism.

Sitwell's maxim: "Poetry is primarily an art, and not a dumping ground for the emotions," leads us naturally into the third phase of modernism—Anti-romanticism. Some of our contemporary composers are revolting against sickly romance, believing it to be played out, or at any rate out of touch with modern conditions. Tuneful melodies and sweet harmonies they religiously avoid in favour of cruder and more rugged forms of expression—parallels with certain types of recent architecture and sculpture. That music should depend on rhythms arranged into stanza-like structures they also feel unnecessary; rather do phrases and balancing phrases gain force by being uneven and definitely irregular, they say. They are disinclined to use the orchestra as a mass of instruments of infinite tonal possibility, but choose to reduce its size to a "chamber orchestra," where each instrument possesses permanent individuality. Further, they think (or at least thought) it time to dispense with traditional patterns like sonatas and symphonies. Nevertheless, much of their music is intellectual rather than emotional, and therefore more inclined to classic than romantic, to the extent that its composers have even been called "Neo-Classics." At the moment there are definite signs that certain anti-romantics are actually returning to conventional patterns, for classical forms have been adopted by Stravinsky, Holst, Vaughan Williams, Walton, Shostakovich, and others as a basis for new works which

in every other sense are quite up to date. Other styles of anti-romanticism may be found in Bartók's pianoforte pieces (written in one key for the right hand, and another for the left), Hindemith's compositions for "chamber orchestra," and a variety of works by the modern Spanish school.

New Melody.

We are at length in a position to examine melody, harmony, rhythm, and structure in the light of recent developments, but it is impossible to deal with each fundamental exclusively, since each is bound up with the others, and changes in one inevitably bring about changes in the rest. However, let us first see what is meant by the new melody. Three innovations are quite apparent. First, vocal writing since the time of Mussorgsky has tended to become less and less like the natural tuneful song we all understand, and has approached nearer to recitation (cf. "recitative"). Secondly, from the time of Strauss onwards, leaps in melodic parts have become bolder and wider, which means they are harder to sing aloud or mentally. Thirdly, since Debussy's early days, tunes in the familiar major and minor scales have been added to by melodies that borrow from the old modes, and melodies in whole-tone scales, half-tone (or semitone or chromatic) scales, and (experimentally) quarter-tone and even microtone scales. Other scales, invented for specific purposes, have been employed by a rearrangement of the tones and semitones within the octave: Rimsky-Korsakov, for instance, once adopted a scale of alternate tones and semitones; Scriabin, on the other hand, assembled the harmonics of a low-lying fundamental note within close limits and called it his "natural" scale (or chord), constructing some of his largest works

upon it. Busoni (an Italian) experimented with thirds of a tone, while Webern (a pupil of Schönberg) devised a tone-colour scale, each note of the melody in a miniature composition being played by a different instrument, tone-quality being of greater import than tone-pitch. While the universal adoption of some of these innovations seems far distant, if ever possible, it is worth remembering that quarter-tones have been used in the East for centuries. All scales containing both tones and semitones possess a centre of gravity or keynote, but pure full-tone and half-tone scales, with their degrees all equidistant have no predominant note, consequently music based upon them sounds rambling, and soon brings monotony. Strictly speaking, there is only one semitone scale, while there are two whole-tone scales (one beginning, say, on C-natural, and the other on C-sharp) which are in no way related, and upon which periodic interchanges (as with Bartók) seem ineffective. Similarly, alternation between mode and mode—a somewhat disturbing practice—appears to be pointless. However, the scales which a composer uses matter less than the manner in which he writes his melodies. The natural and most attractive melodies are those which are singable, and a little analysis will show that the majority of these hover around the common harmonies of the scale. Modern melodies are apt to depend less upon the basic chords than hitherto, with the result that they prove difficult to sing, and difficult to commit to memory. Of course, in the case of *instrumental* parts there is no reason why they should be confined to the narrower limits of vocal melody; these are the tunes which listeners find difficulty in following attentively note by note, but the modern bid for instrumental freedom is justified even if it is temporarily misunderstood.

New Harmony.

The problems of twentieth century harmony are even more involved, and misunderstood. The uninitiated have at least three grievances to put forward. They say they hear nothing but showers of discords, which rarely resolve themselves into satisfactory concords; they say that independent instrumental parts, though full of interest, seldom sound congruous *en masse*; and they point to certain works which come to an end without a suggestion of full finality. In answer to such complaints, a modern composer would explain, first, that the term "discord" is purely relative, and that concords of to-day were regarded as discords yesterday, so that, by training and experience, any listener may accustom himself to combinations that (to him) sound harsh and unacceptable at the moment, but which eventually will be pleasing to the ear. The history of music contains endless examples of such progress. Further, certain "new" chords have come into use quite naturally, that is, they are logical elaborations or extensions of existing harmonic practices. Or, again, Delius and Holst appear to use chords of a pungent nature which are arrived at accidentally, since they are without ancestry; but closer examination shows that the choice was made for some special effect, or they prove to be familiar chords disguised by the addition of an extra note to give fresh colour—it being unusual for a composer to invent unpleasant combinations merely for their own sakes. Secondly, incongruous part-writing may fail to please because the comparatively new experiments in *polytonality* and *atonality* are not understood. When two or more melodic strands *in different keys* are sounded together we have what is known as polytonality; the explanation is simple, but the aural processes involved in its enjoyment are involved, and demand patient study—

in any case the ultimate delight is intellectual, not sensuous. Matters become further complicated when each melodic line, each in its own key, also carries its own harmonies. And yet Holst, Vaughan Williams, Stravinsky, Satie, Milhaud, and Schönberg have all written music in which opposing blocks of harmonies are pitted together.



Atonality is a system of writing music entirely without perceptible key. This is only another way of saying that the music is purely chromatic, or based on the half-tone scale. Milhaud, the advanced French harmonist, has pointed out that atonality is but a step removed from polytonality, because in the simultaneous movement of opposing harmonies, few, if any, systematic progressions emerge, consequently the total mass of sound is completely chromatic. It is because atonalists wander in a sort of musical wilderness that their compositions often lack finality; according to *theory* their works reach the end, but average ears fail to detect it. Restlessness of this kind strains ears and minds and nerves. A harmonic

innovation of another (and more convincing) type occurs where we have *elliptical progressions*, or straightforward series of chords with certain omissions, such omissions being specially designed to prevent the music from becoming too obvious. The device is particularly prevalent in conversation, and to a lesser degree in literature: idiom or custom allows us to clip our phrases and sentences when the meaning is obvious, and could if necessary be supplied mentally. We say, "He is taller than I," knowing full well that the sentence is grammatically incomplete until the words, ". . . am tall" are added. Composers, like writers, sometimes feel there is no point in extending phrases merely for the sake of rules when the meaning is already conveyed and understood. Nevertheless, only the experienced ear can supply mentally, and without effort, certain harmonic omissions—from which we imply that a beginner must be fully alive to the trend of customary chord progressions, and this he can do by hearing plenty of simple music, and learning a little practical harmony, preferably at the keyboard.

New Rhythm.

Rhythmic advancement in recent times can scarcely be said to equal the progress made in melodic and harmonic spheres, that is, if we consider rhythm in its highest sense—the broad pulsation which compels elaborate and refined repetition and balance. The large periodic waves in music are not easily altered, though the smaller divisions within them—the time and the metre—can be arranged and rearranged in many ways. At times, bar-lines have been dispensed with altogether (e.g. Palmgren's *Bird Song*), but the effect on the true rhythm is negligible. After all, this is no innovation, for there were no bar-lines in the Middle Ages, in fact the mechanical measurement

of phrases and sentences later on did much to destroy that ceaseless flow in music, which is the very life-blood of the art. Nor is *Multirhythm*, the frequent shifting from one time to another, anything new, for we have already seen that it was a common characteristic of folk music. When used in these days, it is for some special effect. There is a gradual piling up of the number of beats in consecutive bars in Ravel's *Mother Goose Suite*

Ravel—" Ma mère l'Oye"



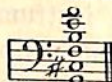
(Second Movement) to suggest Tom Thumb's wanderings along a winding path, the time-signatures being 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, and 5/4. Then, again, *Polyrhythm*, or the use of one or more time-signatures to each melodic part, is not of recent origin. We find it in Schumann, Chopin, Brahms—but chiefly in instrumental combinations, because it is difficult, if not impracticable, in keyboard music. There are still a large number of people who think that *syncopation* was contemporaneous with the coming of "jazz," but a little study will show that Beethoven, Schumann, Brahms, Franck, and Dvořák (among others) used it long ago. Actually, it causes a displacement of the normal accents in the bar, thus producing excitement and unrest. On the surface it appears to possess strength of swing and power of propulsion, and yet if not used with care and discrimination its effect is just the opposite, weakening the forward urge of the rhythmic waves by virtue of its persistent repetition. Persistent regularity actually brings loss of power, which in turn causes flagging attention. This is true both of straightforward and syncopated "rhythms." We admire Shelley's imperfect

rhymes and metrical irregularities just as much as we enjoy Shakespeare's occasional departures from strict iambic pentameters. An art always gains when its rhythmic repetitions are interrupted by arhythms, though in such a degree as to prevent predictability.

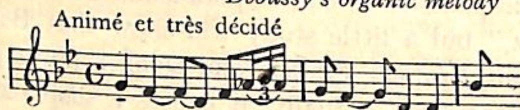
New Form.

Finally, we come to the fourth and last fundamental of music—form. The architecture of an art evolves at a slower pace than its details, thus we must not expect such great changes in structure as in melody, harmony, and rhythm. In this age of experiment the fight for freedom is leading to extremes of every kind. The modern ideal is *parvum in multo*. Scriabin's Sixth Sonata relies almost entirely upon one chord; Debussy's String Quartet largely on one melody; and Holst's *The Planets* on one rhythm (in the opening section of the first part). The

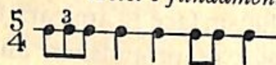
Scriabin's basic chord



Debussy's organic melody



Holst's fundamental rhythm



desire for economy has led to shorter movements, which in a cyclic work may merge into one long movement of three or four sections. This accounts for the Phantasy Form mentioned in an earlier chapter. Polytonality, atonality, multirhythm, polyrhythm, and polyinstrumentation all contribute towards the structure of a work,

sometimes causing the lyrical, stanza-like tendencies to become more akin to blank verse. Poetic jingle is, therefore, less prevalent than it used to be: repetition and symmetrical phrasing are becoming more subtle and complicated, giving way to rhapsody—which is almost formless. Musical development is on the whole emotional rather than thematic, and here again the move is in the direction of economy. Compression is the order of the day. Life to-day is fiercer, speedier, fuller: and music (which reflects life) seems to be a stronger essence of a greater power.

Concentration of thought, of texture, has influenced form in only one direction, however; a far stronger agent has been the desire for freedom, which permeates every phase of life in the modern world. While the traditional musical designs were strongly bound up by a sense of *key*, they flourished. With the coming of atonality (and other modern devices) the barriers broke down, and a movement towards "free form" was the natural outcome. Although the Finnish composer Sibelius is by no means the greatest exponent of "free form" he at least is one of the greatest contemporaries to discard the traditional designs.

Sibelius's use of thematic material is in every sense modern. His seven symphonies reveal how he reverses the normal procedure of presenting his theme fully at first and of developing its parts later on. He announces one by one small fragments of his complete thought, developing them as he goes along, and it is only subsequently that we hear the theme in its full form. The method is intriguing and arresting—at least to the trained musical ear. In spite of his many innovations, Sibelius is not ultra-modern harmonically: indeed, he achieves striking effects by very simple means, yet his

workmanship is that of a surprising innovator. Apart from the symphonies, which have made him so popular in this country, the following works should be studied: *En Saga*, *Karelia*, *Four Legends*, *Finlandia*, the Violin Concerto, *Pohjola's Daughter*, *Oceanides*, and the incidental music to *The Tempest*.

HINTS AND EXERCISES BASED ON CHAPTER VII

1. The best way to understand contemporary music is not merely to hear it over and over again, but to read as much about it as possible. Read about composers and their works, read criticisms of concerts, broadcast programmes, and new gramophone records. Save all annotated programmes of concerts of modern works, and file them, for they are invaluable when hearing such works again.

2. Take an interest in modern art in general. It is surprising how movements in one form of artistic expression infect other forms, and analogies with music—the least tangible of the arts—are immensely important and stimulating.

3. Make a close study of Vol. V of the *Columbia History of Music*.

4. Books to read—

Abraham: *This Modern Stuff* (Archer).
Duncan: *Ultra-modernism in Music* (Winthrop Rogers).
Dyson: *The New Music* (Oxford University Press).
Grey: *A Survey of Contemporary Music* (Oxford University Press).
Grey: *Sibelius* (Oxford University Press).
Henry: *Igor Stravinsky* (Chester).
Hill: *Modern French Music* (Allen & Unwin).
Hull: *Music: Classic, Romantic, and Modern* (Dent).
Hull: *Modern Harmony* (Augener).
Lambert: *Music Ho!* (Faber & Faber).
McNaught: *A Short Account of Modern Music and Musicians* (Novello).
Myers: *Modern Music* (Kegan Paul).
Scott: *Philosophy of Modernism* (Kegan Paul).

CHAPTER VIII

LISTENING TO INSTRUMENTAL TONE

THE oldest musical instrument in the world is the human voice. Before the Chinese, the Abyssinians, the Hebrews, and the Egyptians produced sounds by mechanical means, human voices were making beautiful music. Their tenderness, sympathy, and attractiveness still excel in quality the tones of the most superb instruments known. Vocal music, both individual and concerted, is the most intimate we can imagine. In solo singing we have fusion of poetry and pure melodic line with suitable instrumental harmonies in the background. Masters like Franz Schubert and Hugo Wolf so unified these elements that they enriched the world with art songs of the first order. Songs falling short of these standards either have carelessly chosen words unworthy of musical treatment, ill-fitting melody, or meaningless harmony. Rarely do we hear a perfect art song perfectly sung, for the singer may neither sing well nor interpret artistically. As for unaccompanied songs, they possess their own particular charm, and it is pleasing to note that some of the best large works of this type are British. Very little unaccompanied music exists, however, for the single voice. Whether singing be massed or solo, it gives maximum delight when the words are clear, when the tone is pure and sweet, and the expression is spontaneous and unanimous. The use of the voice orchestrally, i.e. as an additional instrument, is a comparatively modern development. Beethoven's *Choral Symphony* hardly falls into this category, because the chorus in the final movement sings an "Ode to Joy,"

but in some of the orchestral works of Holst and Vaughan Williams new colours have been added to tonal palettes by the introduction of hidden choirs which successfully fuse with the instrumental harmonies. Delius, Rutland Boughton, and Constant Lambert have made similar experiments, while Walton and Bliss have gone a step further by writing compositions for orchestra and a *spoken* voice.

The Pianoforte.

The most popular mechanical instrument at the present time (ignoring of course the radio and gramophone) is the pianoforte. If we wish to be precise, we can trace the name (and probably the idea of hammered strings) back to the beginning of the seventeenth century, but, for all practical purposes, the instrument is little more than 100 years old. Nevertheless, it has much in common with its predecessors—the virginals, spinet, and harpsichord—except that its strings are *struck*, and not plucked. Unlike the organ, its voice is not continuous, uniform, and of equal intensity, but each note is actually a miniature explosion of sound, the rapidly failing vibrations of which the ear tends to prolong and strengthen. From some points of view this is perhaps an advantage, but the true character of the instrument should never be entirely overlooked. Among composers, Beethoven was the first to write keyboard music pianistically, while Chopin and Liszt further explored and developed the new literature, which has now grown to enormous proportions. Scientists are still seeking new mechanical and electrical devices to produce automatism, increased and prolonged tone, and fresh colour values, but none foreshadows the ultimate successor of the modern grand and upright pianoforte.

The Organ.

Though a keyboard instrument, the organ bears little relationship to the pianoforte. Apart from its fundamental (diapason) tone, a variety of qualities (many of them resembling orchestral instruments) can be produced by the operation of "stops." Further, there are two or more keyboards (called manuals) besides the pedal board worked by the feet for the very deepest notes. The art of organ building has reached such a pitch that, in spite of increasing demands for churches and cathedrals, the cinema makes the largest call upon constructors. Organ tone is pure, smooth, and uniform, and therefore lends itself admirably to religious worship. Some composers have become so devoted to this, the "king of instruments," that they have written exclusively for it.

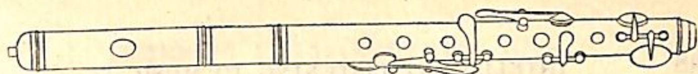
The Orchestra.

At length we come to the orchestra, which consists of a definite and well-balanced company of instrumentalists of various types. In the String Orchestra the violin family of instruments appears alone, while the Full Symphony Orchestra contains Strings, Wood-wind, Brass, and Percussion. Of these groups the first three can produce full harmonies like a mixed choir, and thus sound satisfactory when playing by themselves, but the percussion group is a medley of "kitchen" instruments where vibration is caused by shaking or beating—the result often being noise rather than musical sound. In the string section, the harmony is shared between the first violins, second violins, violas, 'cellos and double-basses; in the wood section the parts are taken by flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons; while the brass choir consists of horns, trumpets, and trombones. There are additional instruments, however: the double (or contra-) bassoon, and the

tuba strengthen the lowest parts in their sections by playing yet an octave deeper; and the piccolo, cor anglais, and bass clarinet do occasional work in the wood group. Two full orchestras are rarely composed *exactly* alike, though a certain balance must be attained, whatever the arrangement. Everything depends upon the piece being played, since the composer usually gives fairly definite directions in the score. The modern combination is likely to exceed a hundred players. Thus Holst's *The Planets* (written in 1918) requires 64 strings (approximately—since the exact number is not specified), 20 woodwind, 15 brass, and 14 percussion—a total of 113. The distribution is: 16 first violins, 16 second violins, 12 violas, 12 violoncellos, 8 double-basses; 4 flutes, 2 piccolos, 1 bass flute, 3 oboes, 1 cor anglais, 1 bass oboe, 3 clarinets, 1 bass clarinet, 3 bassoons, 1 double-bassoon; 6 horns, 4 trumpets, 3 trombones, 2 tubas; 6 timpani (two players), 1 side drum, 1 bass drum, 1 triangle, 1 tambourine, cymbals, 1 gong, 1 glockenspiel, 1 xylophone, 1 celesta, 1 organ, and 2 harps. This may be regarded as a large modern orchestra.

Instruments and Groupings.

Each orchestral group carries its own distinctive qualities. Concerted string tone is exceedingly beautiful: it is as sympathetic, elastic, and expressive as choral tone; it can be loud or soft, and is so pliable that varying intensity is instantaneous; furthermore, it requires but rare periods of rest, although its expanse ranges over the whole system of audible sound. The strings are certainly the backbone of the orchestra, and as such bear the brunt of the work in practically all orchestral compositions. It should be remembered that the early orchestras consisted chiefly of strings. There is far less homogeneity of tone in the



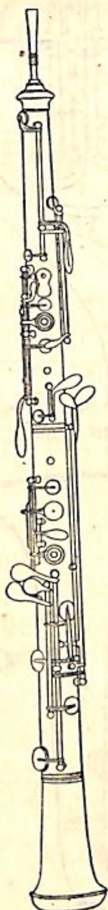
PICCOLO (12)



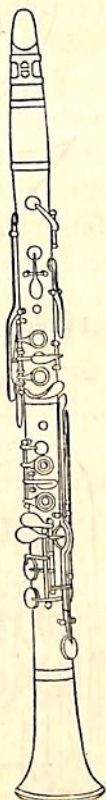
FLUTE (25)



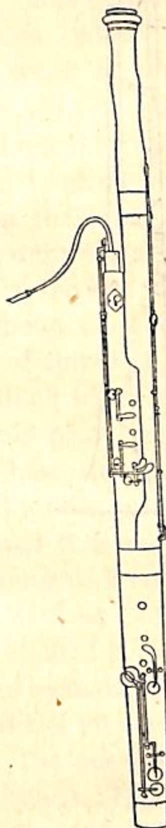
COR ANGLAIS (28)



OBOE (24)



CLARINET (27)



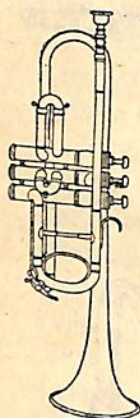
BASSOON (51)



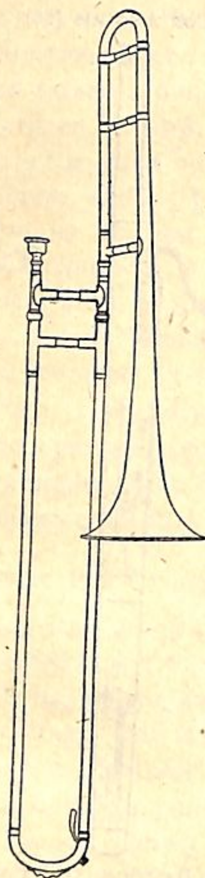
BASS CLARINET (33)

1. THE WOOD WIND GROUP
(*Not strictly to Scale*)
[The small figures in brackets represent in inches each instrument's greatest dimension.]

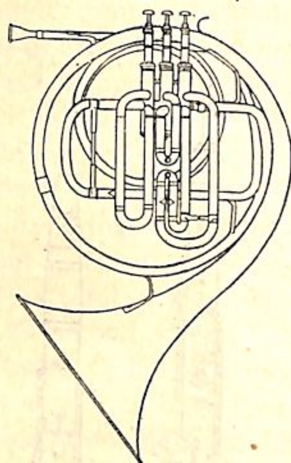
wood-wind group: in fact, it is impossible to describe it as a whole. The shrill piccolo, the mellow flute, the penetrating oboe, the rich clarinet, and the gentle (and



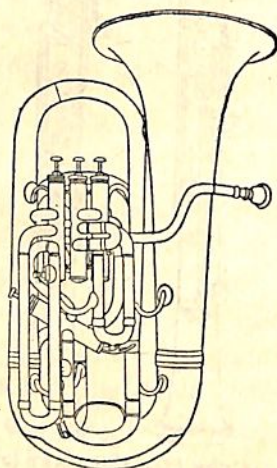
TRUMPET (20)



TROMBONE (45)



FRENCH HORN (Diam. 13)

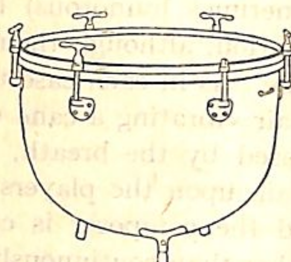


TUBA (26)

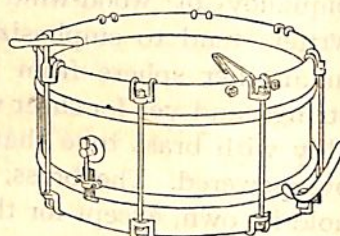
2. THE BRASS GROUP
(*Not strictly to Scale*)
[The small figures in brackets represent in inches each instrument's greatest dimension.]

sometimes humorous) bassoon—all sound well in combination, although their several qualities are in no sense alike. As in each case the tone is produced by a column of air vibrating a cane or metal "reed," vibration being caused by the breath, it will be seen that the physical strain upon the players is greater than with the strings, and the composer is compelled to write intermittently rather than continuously for these instruments. The thin piquancy of wood-wind tone, which modern French writers tend to emphasize, seems to place it altogether in another sphere from the suaver, and more flexible, strings, and yet for sheer volume it compares so unfavourably with brass tone that it is often in danger of being overpowered. The brass, on the other hand, can easily hold its own, except for the more restrained horns, whose mellow, sympathetic sounds are not unlike the human male voice. A single trombone, playing loudly and blatantly can balance a mass of thirty or more violins, but it can also be soft and soothing when muted down to fill in middle parts in harmonic passages. Concerted brass tone can, in fact, be very beautiful indeed: when crisp and loud it is pompous and awe-inspiring; when reduced to little more than a whisper it is most impressive. In these days it is difficult to imagine an orchestra producing vigorous, colourful effects without the assistance of the brass group. The main function of percussion instruments is to give life to the orchestra by marking time and rhythm, and to add occasional streaks of vivid colour. Thus, there are two groups in reality, the one producing noise, the other producing musical sounds. The former consists of drums (timpani, side-drums, bass drum, etc.), cymbals, tambourine, gong, triangle, and castanets; the latter includes tubular bells, glockenspiel, xylophone, harmonica, celesta, and so on. These instruments tend to cheapen

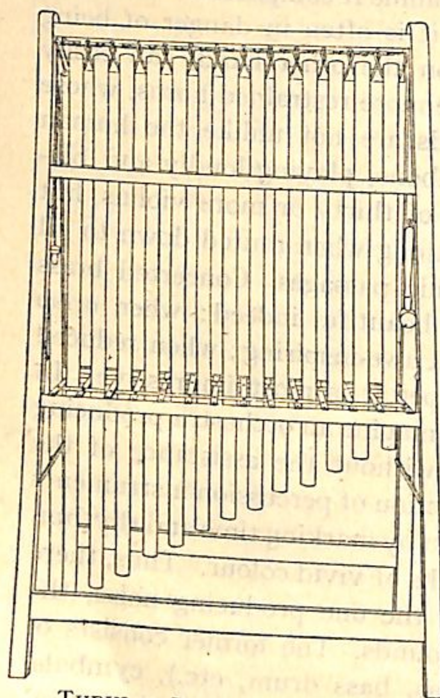


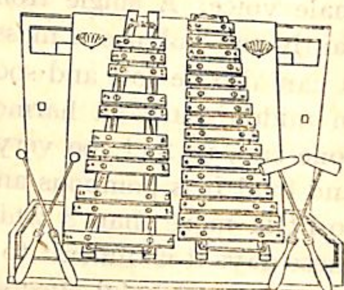


TIMPANI (Diam. 32, 30)

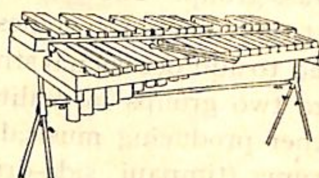


SIDE DRUM (20)





GLOCKENSPIEL (Width 30)



TUBULAR BELLS (Height 70)

XYLOPHONE (Length 56)

3. SOME PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS

(*Not strictly to Scale*)

[The small figures in brackets represent in inches each instrument's greatest dimension.]

a work if used injudiciously. Their introduction is comparatively modern, and while some writers are inclined to add to the group by making use of Chinese blocks, wind machines, syrens, whistles, and even typewriters, iron chains, and wooden planks, others foresee decadence in a style which relies too widely on instruments with such limited powers.

The Development of Orchestration.

These, then, are the elements of the orchestra, a knowledge of which helps so much towards a true enjoyment and understanding of concerted music, whether heard at the source or by mechanical means. A little study of the art and craft of orchestration, which in its turn gradually brings a realization of what is meant by style (i.e. individual style as distinct from the period or school to which a work belongs), is likely to enhance appreciation by ensuring closer contact between listener and composer.

If we listen to the music of Haydn and Mozart, we feel that wood-wind tone is trying to assert an independence that it had never enjoyed hitherto, while in Beethoven the orchestra grows, added importance being given to brass instruments. Schubert continued to explore the melodic qualities of his orchestral forces, and we feel that it was his aim to rescue them from the drudgery of mere routine work. Mendelssohn's style is easily identified: the purity of his wind tone and the exploration of very high passages for violins give his music a peculiar individuality. But not until the time of Berlioz do we notice complete facility in every section of the orchestra. The rich sonority of Wagner's music is chiefly due to the important advances in the construction of brass instruments during his early life, of which he took full advantage.

The steady growth of the orchestra by the addition of extra instruments seemed to reach a climax in the music of Wagner, but the endless search for new effects continued, and in Strauss (a master of orchestration) and some of the moderns the re-enlargement continues. There is much to be said, however, for the composers who, content with existing facilities, achieve a definite style by consistent methods. Brahms and Elgar, for instance, write solidly and produce work that is significant for its noble qualities, but, whereas Brahms is generally sombre, Elgar is usually sparkling.

Score Reading.

There is one important way in which the workings of an orchestra may be understood, and that is by reading the printed score while listening. Nothing is so valuable as a gramophone for such work. A start in a simple way may be made by anyone able to read a single line of melody with facility. It is useful to glance through the pages of the work to be heard and select one instrument which has a prominent part. A trio by Haydn or Mozart might be chosen by an absolute beginner, and the violin selected, the rise and fall of the melodic outline being carefully watched through the whole of one movement. A little experience enables the reader to anticipate rests and re-entries of the instrument *before* they occur: this means that the eye should be a note or two ahead, as it is, for instance, when prose or poetry is read aloud. In due course, an attempt should be made to concentrate equally on two parts at once, which in a trio would be played by the violin and the 'cello. From trios and quartets the reader should proceed to the string orchestra, and finally the full orchestra where anything from fifteen to twenty separate staves have to be followed at once.

These staves are, of course, arranged logically and consistently, the order being—

WOOD-WIND
BRASS
PERCUSSION
PIANO
HARP(S)
SOLO INSTRUMENT (in a Concerto)
STRINGS

The harmonic arrangement of each group is also consistent, trebles being above altos, altos above tenors, and

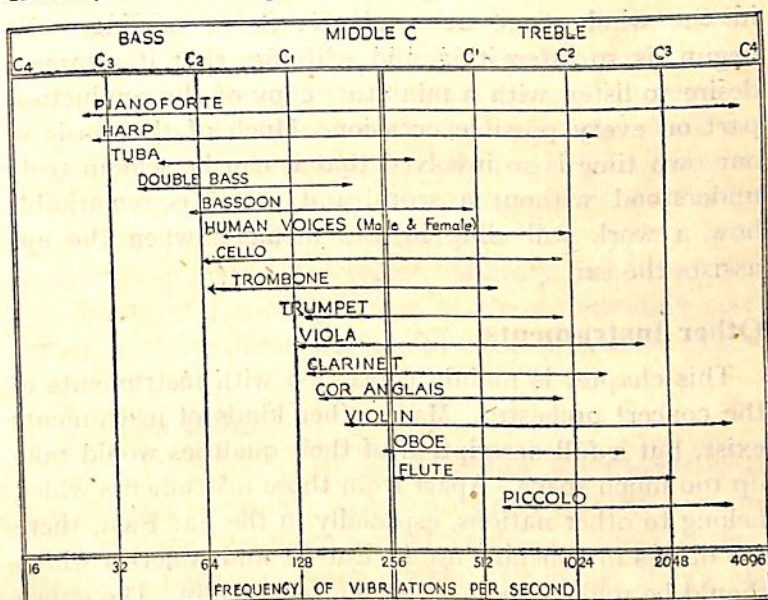


DIAGRAM SHOWING RANGE OF ORCHESTRAL INSTRUMENTS

so on. Occasionally, the instruments normally playing one part split up into two or more melodic lines. Stravinsky's *Petroushka* contains as many as seventeen such lines for the strings alone. A complicated modern score of this kind demands an exceptionally quick ear and eye, especially when a full page holds no more than a dozen

bars of music; in a rapid scherzo movement these would fly past in the twinkling of an eye, the act of turning the pages at the right time being quite an accomplishment for a novice. Slow movements are, therefore, best to begin with, the ear identifying leading groups of instruments on each page. For the moment it might be the wood-wind, when the eye would fly to the top of the page, at the same time sensing the work of the other instruments lower down. This is not *reading* the score, but *following* it; later—much later—the eye becomes accustomed to taking in the whole page at a glance. Score reading, once begun, is so interesting and edifying, that it creates a desire to listen with a miniature copy of the conductors' part on every possible occasion. Much of the music of our own time is so involved that it can be seldom truly understood without a score, and yet it is remarkable how a work will cling in the memory when the eye assists the ear.

Other Instruments.

This chapter is mainly concerned with instruments of the concert orchestra. Many other kinds of instruments exist, but a full description of their qualities would take up too much space. Apart from those instruments which belong to other nations, especially in the Far East, there are others in constant use in Europe and America which should be understood and recognized aurally. The dance band draws upon the legitimate orchestra for its solo instruments, and this is to the good, except in those instances where the natural musical tone is thinned and distorted. A good example is the saxophone, a regular member of the military band and an occasional visitor to the orchestra. It may be described as a brass bass clarinet, but its tone is inferior to its forbear, and it is not

particularly successful as a solo instrument. Nevertheless, the jazz band is unable to exist without it, possibly because of its sensuous tone-quality, which resembles in some respects the infinitely purer tone of the 'cello.

The Military Band.

The military band, with its long history, is not a rarity either in public or broadcast programmes, although many people are in complete ignorance of its constitution. Usually there are: Flutes and piccolo; oboes; clarinets (two varieties); bassoons; cornets or trumpets; horns; saxophones (alto and tenor); trombones (tenor and bass); euphonium; basses; drums. The average number of players is 35. Compared with the orchestra, there are no strings, but a preponderance of brass. The literature for military bands is unfortunately small, so that a concert may contain rearrangements of orchestral compositions—a matter for regret. Military bands are not necessarily of the army, some of the outstanding combinations being purely civilian in constitution and origin.

The Brass Band.

The brass band, as its name implies, is all brass (with the addition of drums). There are usually about 20 members, playing: Soprano cornet; cornets; flugel cornet; saxhorns; baritones; euphoniums; trombones (tenor and bass); basses; bass drum; side drum; timpani. Though unable to achieve much variety of tone colour, the brass band is at any rate smooth and homogeneous. Its literature exceeds that for the military band, possibly because the National contests have provided a stimulus to composers for the reason that a new test piece is written by an eminent musician annually.

The bands we have considered may be grouped thus—

STRING ORCHESTRA.	STRINGS ONLY
BRASS BAND .	BRASS AND PERCUSSION
MILITARY BAND .	WIND, BRASS, AND PERCUSSION
FULL ORCHESTRA .	STRINGS, WIND, BRASS AND PERCUSSION

HINTS AND EXERCISES BASED ON CHAPTER VIII

1. A few useful things to do at an orchestral concert—

(*a*) Note the disposition of the four orchestral groups on the platform, and note which instrumentalists are farthest from, and which nearest to the conductor.

(*b*) Endeavour to discover which instrumentalist gives the *A* for tuning. Watch and listen to the other players immediately afterwards.

(*c*) Study closely the gestures of the conductor during the performance, trying to anticipate his intentions if possible. Notice especially how he "leads in" groups of players here and there. During a concerto watch his actions when the soloist is playing alone.

(*d*) Observe the string and brass players using their "mutes." Listen to the changes of volume and tone at these points.

(*e*) Find out which instruments (if any) point away from the audience.

(*f*) Note the position of the celesta.

(*g*) Avoid if possible the use of annotated programmes *during* the performance. Digest the matter therein before the concert.

(*h*) Refrain from applauding *between* movements of a long work, and try to encourage others to follow suit.

2. Seek every opportunity of handling and examining as many musical instruments as possible; also examine the interior of a pianoforte and a church organ.

3. More important still, become familiar with the tone quality of every orchestral instrument, so that (say) a clarinet solo heard on the wireless can be identified readily.

4. The following gramophone records demonstrate the tone of each instrument of the orchestra. They have been chosen, not so much for their musical value, as for the quality of recording, which on a good gramophone is remarkably faithful.

Both Columbia and H.M.V. have issued special records for educational purposes, giving short, typical passages by each instrument. (Columbia 9421–2; H.M.V. C1311–2.)

VIOLIN. *Sonata No.* 3: Brahms (H.M.V. C1925).
VIOLA. *Sonata in F-Minor*: Brahms (Columbia LX225).
'CELLO. *Le Cygne*: Saint-Saëns (H.M.V. DB8899).
DOUBLE BASS. *Carnival of Animals* (Elephants): Saint-Saëns (H.M.V. DB8897).
STRING ORCHESTRA. *Fantasia on a Theme by Tallis*: Vaughan Williams (Decca K816).
STRINGS PIZZICATO. *Symphony No.* 4: Tchaikovsky (H.M.V. DB2902).
PICCOLO. *Language of the Nightingale*: Gennin (Columbia BD178).
FLUTE. *Rondo from Suite in B-Minor*: Bach (Columbia DB 507).
OBOE. *Sinfonia to Cantata* 156: Bach (Columbia DB506).
COR ANGLAIS. *William Tell Overture*: Rossini (Decca PO5075).
CLARINET. *Clarinet Concerto*: Mozart (Columbia DB834).
BASSOON. *Allegro spiritoso*: Senaillé (Columbia L1826).
WIND ENSEMBLE. *Octet for Wind Instruments*: Stravinsky (Columbia LX308).
TRUMPET. *Trumpet Voluntary*: Purcell (Columbia L1986).
FRENCH HORN. *Horn Concerto*: Mozart (H.M.V. DB3974).
TROMBONE. *Prelude to Act* 3, *Lohengrin*: Wagner (Decca LY6050).
TIMPANI. *Mastersingers Overture*: Wagner (H.M.V. C2809).
SIDE DRUM. *Fra Diavolo Overture*: Auber (Parlophone E11201).
BASS DRUM AND TAMBOURINE. *Cockaigne Overture*: Elgar (H.M.V. DB1935).
CASTANETS. *The Gondoliers—Dance a Cachucha*: Gilbert and Sullivan (Columbia DB391).
GONG. *Russia*: Balakiref (Columbia DB1237).
GLOCKENSPIEL. *Ballet Egyptien*: Luigini (Decca PO5064–5).
TUBULAR BELLS. 1812 *Overture*: Tchaikovsky (H.M.V. DB1664).
CELESTA. *Casse-Noisette Suite*: Tchaikovsky (H.M.V. C2922).
HARP. *Introduction and Allegro*: Ravel (H.M.V. C1662).
MILITARY BAND. *Oberon Overture*: Weber (Columbia DX580).
FULL ORCHESTRA. *España*: Chabrier (Columbia LX880).

5. Practice score-reading along the lines already suggested.
6. Look up articles in Grove on various instruments, orchestration, and so on.
7. Read—
   Howes: *Full Orchestra* (Secker and Warburg).

CHAPTER IX

LISTENING TO OPERA AND BALLET MUSIC

In England we hear a great deal of opera and ballet music, although not (except in London) under the conditions intended by the composers, namely, in a theatre, and during a stage performance. Many reasons are put forward for the absence of adequate facilities for the regular presentation of opera and ballet in this country, but we can ignore these at the moment, remembering that from the musical point of view concert performances give the listener better opportunities of enjoying the music purely as music. Operatic selections, suites of dances, overtures, intermezzi, arrangements of arias, and the like, are heard so frequently that if we understand the works from which they are taken we are likely to enjoy them all the more. A short sketch of the history and development of the operatic art may, therefore, prove useful.

The Development of Opera.

The mainsprings of lyrical drama belong to Ancient Greece, where the *Agamemnon* and *Antigone* were acted, the vital points of the plots being emphasized by chanting choruses. The decline of Greece spelled the decline of drama for many centuries, however, and in the days when the Christian Church nurtured the art of music, little progress was made. Eventually, dramatized versions of Bible stories were acted in churches for the spiritual edification of congregations, and were called moralities, mysteries, or miracle-plays. Some of these, though religious, contained comic episodes, for the Church mingled

entertainment with doctrine in the early centuries to secure its ends. In the reign of Henry VII a new mode of dramatic entertainment appeared in the shape of the masque, a kind of pantomime, combining the arts of poetry, singing, playing, dancing, costume, and stagecraft, the actors being masked. *Comus* is an example of this elaborate form of art.

Lully.

But the masque was in no sense true opera. Until the close of the sixteenth century, no attempt seems to have been made to resuscitate the musical dialogue of the Greek tragedies. A few Italian aristocrats met in Florence with this intention, but, though they failed in their main object, they produced the *cantata*, a work for soloist and lutenist. It was an important step forward, because the singer could express the meaning of the words clearly, whereas the earlier madrigals obscured the words because of their contrapuntal character. The plots of these early works were not drawn from life, but from Greek mythology, e.g. Peri's *Eurydice* (1600), and Monteverdi's *Orfeo* (which, among other things, introduced an orchestra for accompanying and for setting the pace of the dances). Gradually opera became an institution in Italy. Scarlatti introduced *recitativo secco* (simple melodic narrative with the flow of ordinary speed accompanied by the harpsichord), *recitativo stromentato* (more emotional declamation accompanied by the entire orchestra), and the *aria* (a song in Ternary pattern used primarily for soliloquy). This was towards the close of the seventeenth century, some years after a Florentine named Lully had gone to live in France. Lully, a page boy, loved music to the extent of trying his skill at arranging a number of ballets; he was so successful that he transferred his

attention to opera, and, before he died in 1687, he had written eighteen musical dramas of such significance that the home of opera shifted to Versailles. Lully's chief contribution to this increasingly popular form of entertainment lay in the Prelude or Overture, which he raised to a position of great importance. The "French" Overture was in two sections, (*a*) a slow, serious opening, followed by (*b*) a quicker movement usually in contrapuntal style. This form was universally adopted.

From 1750 to 1850.

The scene next shifts to the German composers Gluck and Handel. Whereas Handel stuck to the rigid and absurd rules and conventions that had by now hedged around the art, Gluck set about reforms which again gave it a thrust forward. From 1762 onwards Gluck introduced the chorus, the overture which aroused a real feeling of expectancy, and the subdued type of music which gave the plot a chance to exert its influence. His *Alceste* and *Iphigénie en Aulide* are sufficient proof that the reforms were justified. By the time that Mozart began writing operas the path was clear: *Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Magic Flute* were melodious, neatly constructed, and light in character, and have survived to this day. Eighteenth century operas were not all serious in intent, for, in addition to the dramas, comic operas, and opera buffa (*recitativo secco* interspersed between the songs) were written. And then in the nineteenth century, romanticism found its way into the dramatic art. Weber, whom we have already noted, gave less prominence to the method of song and dance, and introduced a continuous plot, continuous music, supernatural elements, realistic effects, and other devices calculated to arouse curiosity and stimulate imagination. Weber's innovations proved

very successful, especially in his two works *Der Freischütz* (The Freeshooter), and *Oberon*. His lead was followed by Wagner. Meanwhile Cherubini, Meyerbeer, and Offenbach in Paris, and Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti in Italy developed the art along other lines.

Wagner.

But no composer influenced the development of opera so much as Richard Wagner (1813–83), the idealist. He felt that the senses, the intellect, the emotions, and the spirit were not sufficiently aroused in the theatre, and he made up his mind to use scenery, costumes, lighting, singing, poetry, and music to produce tremendous climaxes hitherto unknown. His aim was to unify the arts of the theatre in one comprehensive scheme, which he called the Music Drama. He relied on sagas and legends for his plots; he wrote music such as had never been heard in the theatre before; he demanded stage properties upon a scale truly alarming. So exacting was he in his requirements that he could not rest until a theatre of his own design was built at Bayreuth. Yet Wagner holds an undisputed first place in the hearts of opera-lovers to-day. In some directions, of course, he was unsuccessful; his theories were excellent, whereas his practice sometimes missed the mark. His works are too serious: they lack relief. They are too lengthy: the declamations of some of his greatest characters would still be long if halved. His stagecraft, though useful and necessary, verges on the farcical in reality. His music, written by a masterful hand showing consummate skill in orchestration and counterpoint, is so rich and full that apart from the drama the intellect is taxed to a point of exhaustion. Nor can many people tolerate Wagner's unending recitative, even though it rises at times to heights of pure lyricism. Even

those who admit that the highest thoughts gain by being expressed poetically, or that statues and pictures lose nothing by violating truth as Nature teaches it, cannot bring themselves to accept endless recitative as an idealized form of speech. For Wagner in his latest works abolished the aria, the duet, the chorus, and all forms of "set-pieces." Nevertheless, the music, *qua* music, is (in this country) more acceptable in the concert hall: the scheme of *leitmotiv* (leading themes) recalls the efforts of programme composers in the first half of the nineteenth century. A germ idea represented a character, an object, or a symbol in the story of the opera much as it did in a symphonic poem. In *The Ring*, Wagner's mightiest effort, there are more than seventy of these representative themes. A Wagnerian might possibly find seventy tunes challenging: the ordinary opera-goer regards them as encumbrances. Arranged chronologically, the most important operas are: *The Flying Dutchman*, *Tannhaüser*, *Lohengrin*, *Tristan and Isolda*, *The Mastersingers*, *The Ring* (consisting of *Rhinegold*, *The Valkyrie*, *Siegfried*, and *The Twilight of the Gods*), and *Parsifal*.

Twentieth Century Opera.

In the last 50 years, operas have come from all parts of Europe. Humperdinck, a German, contributed the dainty *Hansel and Gretel*; Verdi, Leoncavallo, and Puccini, all Italians, and Bizet, Massenet, and Debussy, all French, have added generously to modern opera. Some magnificent Slav operas have been written by Smetana, Dvořák, Glinka, Mussorgsky, Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Tchaikovsky.

So far, Great Britain has not come into the picture: since the days of the masques nothing of real importance appeared except for Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. A revival

seemed imminent in the eighteenth century with the advent of the ballad opera by Gay—*The Beggar's Opera*—but (though successful in itself) it did not develop into real opera. Balfe and Wallace copied the style a hundred years later. Within living memory are the first productions of Gilbert and Sullivan's light operas, a group of a dozen or more works packed with sparkling libretti, witty situations, and melodious songs. These popular entertainments, which fill theatres wherever they are given, are truly British in character, and, since they are subtle satires upon the conditions of Victorian life, fail to interest continental audiences in the same marked degree. They are masterpieces of their type, though they cannot be placed among the immortals, as they are limited in scope and slight in character. They have set a fashion for a particular style of tuneful musical comedy, which, though harmless, cannot vie with serious art. But a revival of British opera of a more serious nature does reveal itself in the present century. Dame Ethel Smyth's *The Wreckers,* and *The Boatswain's Mate*, Boughton's *The Immortal Hour*, Holst's *The Perfect Fool*, and Vaughan Williams's *Hugh the Drover*—these lead us to believe that a new era of British operatic art has opened. Unfortunately, these works are so rarely performed that, but for the gramophone and radio, many people would have no first-hand knowledge of them at all.

The Development of the Ballet.

The fact that the ballet, like the opera, is so far removed from realism and so bound up with convention that many people are unable to bring themselves to enjoy it, need not concern us here, for our main aim is to discover means of understanding the *music*, apart from whether it is performed in the concert hall or the theatre. A brief

survey of the history of the ballet, acquaintance with some of its outstanding examples, and a few visits to the theatre ought to be sufficient to create an interest in this particular type of art, for it is indeed difficult to appreciate the music of *Petroushka* without knowing the story and seeing at least one performance on the stage.

Although the dramatic ballet as we know it to-day began where the music drama left off, dancing, gesture, and mimicry are themselves as old as declamatory speech, if not older. We find early manifestations of this primitive art in ancient Greece, and we know that the Christian Church, which scantily supported opera, banned the dance as an outward expression of paganism. The first signs of ballet dancing in court life, however, probably belong to the period of Louis XIV, but the art was not fully developed until the eighteenth century.

Noverre's *Lettres sur la danse*, published in 1760, did much to bring about a revival, a direct result of which was a school of trained dancers famed all over Europe. For the first time in history, composers wrote ballet-music—a great advance, for it was the custom previously to arrange the music to suit the dance. The nineteenth century saw improvements in the technique of dancing and in the development of stage mechanism, rather than in the growth of the art itself. And then there was a lull, followed by the great Russian awakening at the beginning of the present century. Actually, Russia had been preparing for years, attempts having been made within her Imperial Court to ape the achievements of France hundreds of years before. An enterprising supporter, Serge Diaghilev, in conjunction with Fokine the dancer, founded a private company which gave its first season in Paris in 1909. Bakst was engaged to design the costumes and scenery, and Tcherepnin took over the duties

of orchestral conductor. The "Russian Ballet" soon became the greatest company of dancers in the world. In addition to classical examples like Fokine's *Les Sylphides* (to music by Chopin), and *Carnaval* (to music by Schumann), and ballets arranged from distinguished orchestral works like Debussy's *Afternoon of a Faun*, and Rossini's music arranged by Respighi and called *La Boutique Fantasque*, the company produced ballets especially written by eminent Russian composers. Fokine's *Scheherazade* (the music by Rimsky-Korsokov), and Stravinsky's *Petroushka* are two notable instances. Until Diaghilev's death in 1929 the company went from strength to strength, latterly producing new and elaborate works of post-impressionist character. But the ballet, like the opera, is an expensive form of entertainment, and the demise of its energetic promoter swiftly brought about a breaking-up of the Russian company.

Stravinsky and Others.

Stravinsky's ballet music is deserving of close study. Such examples as *Fire Bird*, *Petroushka*, and *The Rite of Spring* may be heard on gramophone records.

More recent ballet music, much of which is now available on gramophone records, is: *Love the Magician*, and *The Three-Cornered Hat* by Falla; *Chout* by Prokofiev; *Job* by Vaughan Williams; *Checkmate* by Bliss; *Façade* by Walton; and *Horoscope* by Constant Lambert.

Opera Music in the Concert Hall.

Away from the theatre, the listener has daily opportunities of hearing music from both operas and ballets. Selections from ballad operas, comic operas, and musical comedies as a rule consist of collections of songs strung together by modulating passages, suitable instruments

replacing the original vocal parts. Similar selections from grand opera may contain arias, duets, marches, and dances. But some of the finest excerpts from the great operas require little or no rearrangement because they are already purely orchestral. This is especially true of Wagner's dramas: the overtures and preludes are, of course, normally played before a lowered curtain, but instrumental episodes like *The Ride of the Valkyries*, *Forest Murmurs*, *The Entrance of the Gods into Valhalla*, *The Dance of the Apprentices*, and the *Venusburg Music*, although forming part of the action of the plays, are equally enjoyable away from the footlights. Their wealth of harmony, melody, rhythm, their skilful counterpoint, their dependence upon the *leitmotif*, their emotional power, and their brilliant orchestration sufficiently engage the ear and the mind without additionally exercising the eye.

Ballet Music in the Concert Hall.

The so-called ballet suites should not be confused with orchestral suites which, though similar, are unassociated with the dance. Some suites, such as *The Sea* by Bridge, and *Mozartiana* by Tchaikovsky are collections of pieces arranged purely for concert performance: they are the legitimate successors of the small keyboard suites of the seventeenth century. Others are scored from original pianoforte suites, as, for example, Mussorgsky's *Pictures from an Exhibition*, Debussy's *The Children's Corner*, and Ravel's *Mother Goose*. Others still may consist of incidental music to plays, like Elgar's *Wand of Youth*, Grieg's *Peer Gynt*, and Quilter's *Where the Rainbow Ends*. Ballet suites, on the contrary, are groups of prominent dances rearranged and adapted for orchestral performance. They are true dances, not dance-like compositions. Their predominant feature is dynamic rhythm,

not artistic beauty. They are intended, not to deliver a message, but to suggest action, movement, life in its physical sense. Therefore, what little musical development is present is emotional rather than thematic. The listener should have no difficulty in enjoying such music if he calls to mind the stage, the footlights, and the dancers.

HINTS AND EXERCISES BASED ON CHAPTER IX

1. A love for opera and the ballet can be cultivated only by visits to the theatre, such visits being preceded by thorough preparation. The first stage of preparation consists of getting to know the plot, and there are scores of collections of opera stories published in English. Next the libretto needs close consideration, for the stage presentation is rarely straightforward like the prose synopsis. Such librettos are printed separately, or with the vocal score (the orchestration reduced to double staves for the piano). Public libraries usually lend both plots and scores. Finally the orchestral parts should be played over at the piano, a keen look-out being kept for leading motifs, and other devices. Before seeing a Wagner opera for a second time such preparation is absolutely essential, and for this reason some score editions give lists of "motto themes," suitably labelled and indexed. Gramophone records are at all times useful. It goes without saying that it is best to hear an opera in English on the first occasion.

2. Before hearing operatic overtures and ballet suites, it is as well to seek some information on the operas and ballets to which they belong. In the following short list, added enjoyment may come by pursuing such a course—

Falla's *Love the Magician.*
Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel.*
Smetana's *The Bartered Bride.*
Stravinsky's *Fire Bird.*
Stravinsky's *Petroushka.*

3. Wagner's most exquisite orchestral piece is *The Siegfried Idyll*, which may be heard on H.M.V. DB2920–1. It is of special interest to Wagnerites, because four of the themes on which it is constructed also occur in *Siegfried*, the third opera in *The Ring*. Another tune is an old-fashioned German lullaby.

4. Had this book been purely a history of music, some attention

would have been given to Oratorios, Cantatas, Masses, Motets, and so on. And their association with the development of opera would also have been traced. It is sufficient to say here, however, that oratorios are much like operas in form, but they are always *sacred*, and are sung without action. The plot invariably relates a religious story, solo singers, a chorus, and an orchestra combining to produce the work. Cantatas are sometimes secular, and sometimes sacred.

5. Some books of opera stories—
    - Davison: *Stories from the Operas* (Laurie).
    - Dent: *Mozart's Operas* (Chatto).
    - Gramophone Co., Ltd.: *Opera at Home.*
    - Hadden: *Favourite Operas* (Nelson).
    - Hadden: *The Great Operas* (Jack).
    - Kobbé: *The Complete Opera Book* (Putnam).
    - Markham Lee: *Story of Opera* (James).
    - McSpadden: *Opera Synopses* (Harrap).
    - McSpadden: *The Stories of Wagner's Operas* (Harrap).
    - Newman: *Gluck and the Opera* (Dobell).
    - Streatfield: *The Opera* (1896–1902).
    - Upton: *Standard Operas* (Hutchinson).
    - Wrench: *Stories of Famous Operas* (Pearson).
    - Young: *The Wagner Stories* (Richards).
6. Some books on the ballet—
    - Beaumont: *Complete Book of Ballets* (Putnam).
    - Bentley: *Ballet Hoo* (Cresset Press).
    - Dandré: *Anna Pavlova* (Cassell).
    - Haskell: *Balletomane's Scrap Book* (Black).
    - Haskell: *Balletomania* (Gollancz).
    - Haskell: *Diaghilev* (Gollancz).
    - Haskell: *Prelude to Ballet* (Nelson).

CHAPTER X

MUSIC AND THE ARTS

THE more we listen to music intelligently, the more we realize, either consciously or unconsciously, that it has much in common with the arts of painting, poetry, literature, drama, sculpture, and architecture. By knowing something of its history, construction, style, instrumentation, and general purport, we learn by perseverance how to detect some of those subtleties which may hitherto have escaped our notice. Before appreciation can be complete, this material knowledge must be supplemented by an understanding of music as *art*; in other words, in addition to enjoying it in and for itself, we must regard it as an expression in terms of sound of some experience which the composer feels he cannot keep to himself, and which he believes we shall benefit by knowing. Because music is transitory, and belongs to time rather than space, a composer's meaning is indeed difficult if not impossible to appreciate fully. It might be imagined that the painter and sculptor are able to convey their messages more directly because their arts are more in touch with a tangible world. Actually, however, this is not the case, for art is no mere reflection of Nature. A painter may be inspired by Nature, but he rarely gives us a photographic study of his impressions. He attempts to convey to us his *emotions*, and to do this he disintegrates concrete things within his mind, and reassembles them to form orderly and personal compositions. Similarly, the sculptor is no mere copyist: he strives to present us with his idealized conception of form, together with his personal comments on the character of his model. Even the poet,

the novelist, and the dramatist draw life in transformation; natural speech, and natural description are lifted above the commonplace into idealized language, and are subject to convention and all kinds of expressive devices which have become legitimate and acceptable. We see, therefore, that art is a spiritual, not a material camera, and that the artist must have various resources at his command before he makes his meaning clear and intelligible. These resources are common to all the arts, and it follows that whenever difficulties are encountered in music much may be learned by tracing parallels in arts carried out in other media.

Colour.

One of the most obvious is that of colour. Colour is not confined solely to the art of painting. It is present in sculpture, architecture, writing, and music. Because the painter cannot escape from it he is the most likely to use it wisely. He knows the full significance of harmony, contrast, and discord—indeed any ignorance or carelessness on his part would be immediately detected by his public. Quietness and easy satisfaction he achieves by the use of harmony; he mutually intensifies his colours by contrasting them; and by careful choice of discord he can break up any tendency towards cloying sweetness. Part of the musician's colour-palette consists of instrumental tone; the rest is occupied by key, or tonality. Modulation between closely related keys gives pleasing, harmonious effects; excursions into more distant keys, though a little more dangerous, add colour, and give welcome contrast; sudden movements between keys bearing no relationship whatever produce jarring discord —a valuable concomitant in subsequent emphatic resolution. Just as the painter avoids equality of colour

masses, so the composer arranges that one key predominates over another. What colours are actually chosen depends largely upon the subject to be depicted. Whistler used subdued greys and browns in the portrait of his mother, while Holbein's *Anne of Cleves* is flooded in rich reds and glowing browns. Similarly, Debussy's *Afternoon of a Faun* is executed in liquid, delicate orchestral tints, but Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* dazzles with instrumental brilliance. Roughly speaking, the classics preferred harmony, the romantics contrast, while the moderns incline to discord. Pure colour diminishes to tone (or light and shade) in architecture and sculpture, although at all times the chiaroscuro of surroundings must be taken into account. Poetry is the art of word-painting: in sombre strains long, round vowels and quiet, liquid consonants are employed; in bright, happy, emphatic themes there is a preponderance of short, sharp vowels and crisp, explosive consonants. In this respect Tennyson is a master. Masefield's *Cargoes* displays a variety of colour values in three short stanzas.

Rhythm.

A second basic element in art is rhythm—the rhythm or vital force which measures the amount of energy in a poem, painting, or musical work. The line of life which flows through such compositions may vary in quality, and that quality determines by its liveliness or dullness its ultimate effect upon our senses. Architectural rhythm clearly reveals the character of its creators. The elusive curves in the pillar-caps of the temples of Karnak, and the subtle domes of Oriental mosques reflect the mystery and magical charm of Eastern peoples; Greek thought is typified in the delicately modified squareness of Athenian temples; Roman self-concentration is crystallized in

the semicircular arch, and Western aspiration in pointed windows and spires. The painter makes great use of the power of rhythmic suggestion. He chooses gentle curves to express a Madonna, and hard lines all at variance for a battle scene. He uses horizontal lines for tranquillity (e.g. Millet's *The Shepherdess*), and verticals for nobility, dignity, and strength (in a picture of a pine wood, or a lighthouse). Upright lines and springing curves are always attractive. Stonehenge might have fewer visitors were all its stones fallen flat; Dvořák's symphony *From the New World* wins attention at the outset by the springing tune in the opening movement. Poets fit their rhythms to their themes. Life and death call for opposite treatment, e.g.—

> I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris, and he;
> I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three.

and—

> Toll for the brave,
> The brave that are no more.

The composer works in exactly the same way. Compare Mendelssohn's *Spring Song* and Grieg's *Death of Ase* (which are parallels with the above poems).

Shape.

A third basic element of art is predominant shape, that is, general dimension as distinct from internal pattern. In spite of the rectangular frame of a picture, the general scheme of the composition may be founded upon a triangle, a circle, a square, and so on. The triangular design, which appears in seven pictures out of every ten, is satisfactory because of its stability, for the apex of the triangle always points upwards. Squarish designs, much favoured at the present time, both in painting and sculpture (e.g. Epstein), emanate strength. Circular

designs suggest eternity and divinity, and are, therefore, aptly employed in a picture like Raphael's *Sistine Madonna.* In architecture we find predominant design, as in the pyramids, the façades of Greek and Roman temples and Saxon and Norman churches, and French châteaux. The temporal arts of poetry and music, moving as they do through the passage of time, rely chiefly on detailed internal design, nevertheless they are based upon a central idea which grows organically, carrying the mind forward to the point of climax. The larger musical forms are closely related to the larger literary forms. The epic in prose and poetry is analogous with the symphonic poem, for it is of considerable length and scope, and "treats of one great complex action in a grand style, and with fullness of detail"; since it is narrative in style, it is similar to programme works on a large scale. In many respects the novel can be brought into the analogy. The symphony will bear comparison with the ode, for, in both forms, an attempt is made to produce a lofty effusion of intense feeling. The shorter lyric poem resembles the romantic musical fragment, while the sonnet and the fugue are similar because they both evolve from one pregnant thought. Free verse (*vers libre*) has its counterpart in some modern forms of music, where design is of secondary importance.

Detailed Pattern.

Turning from the larger aspects of design to the detailed elements, we find that balance (mechanical and artistic), repetition (exact and inexact), together with such devices as echo, allusion, and so on, are of great importance. Variety is the spice of art, though balance and repetition are the basic ingredients. The Egyptian column, the classical moulding (such as "egg and dart"), and the

pointed Norman window were motifs repeated time and time again in one building. The consonant and vowel used by the poet in assonance and alliteration, and the telling phrase evolved by the novelist and dramatist, assume significance and force when skilfully repeated. The painter's masses of light and shade, planes of atmosphere, patterned shapes, and colour splashes are cunningly devised and placed so that they can be repeated and balanced at fresh points on the canvas. The musician builds up his work by returning to initial time patterns, snatches of melody, and harmonies and rhythms.

Style.

Personal style in art is the fourth of the basic elements, and, being individualistic, it cannot be summed up in general terms. As form is the body of an artistic creation, and rhythm its life, so is style its true spirit. Too obvious form, too persistent rhythm, and too self-centred style mar a work almost as much as a lack of these components. The age to which an artist belongs, his nationality, his choice of subject, the medium in which he works, and his inherent character—these are factors which determine his personal style as much as the style or category in which his creations ultimately fall. Although an artist may have his idiosyncrasies, which to the student are quite obvious, it does not follow that the easier the recognition of style, the greater the master. Dickens, Tennyson, Rembrandt, and Mendelssohn all disclose their identities by their personal idioms, but this is neither to their credit nor discredit. The vital question is, are their works sincere, purposeful, lasting?

Good Taste.

And now, finally, we leave the artist and his work, the composer and his music, and return to the listener,

for whom this book is written. A time comes when, after having "cultivated attentive and well-directed listening over a long period," the student displays powers of reliable criticism and distinctive taste. Of course, good taste in composer and performer is essential, otherwise he remains in obscurity; but the listener has the choice in his own hands, for the degree of his own discriminative faculty is not likely to influence others, unless he be a pedagogue. For guidance in the development of this faculty, Birrell's *How to Tell a Good Book from a Bad One* is most helpful. "If we would possess good taste we must take pains about it. We must study models, we must follow examples, we must compare methods. . . ." Or Burke's essay on the *Sublime and Beautiful*, which says: "The cause of a wrong taste is the defect of judgment, and this may arise from a natural weakness of the understanding, or, which is more commonly the case, it may arise from a want of proper and well-directed exercise, which alone can make it strong and ready."

We must, therefore, be grounded in that kind of music which is traditionally good, and if we are unable to enjoy it we should postpone comment until our horizons are considerably widened. Few of us enter the world endowed with a right judgment, nor should we speak authoritatively until we have diligently studied, criticized, and compared for some long period. A reproach concerning our personal taste in dress may cut us keenly, yet censure upon our artistic judgment may neither affect us nor cause us to make amends. And yet the problem is both difficult and pressing—difficult because adequate assistance is rarely at hand, and pressing because the artistic output is so great, so swift, and so varied in these days that it is almost impossible to keep abreast. We must not rely solely upon tradition, else our admiration may

be savoured with pretence. Although we must acknowledge past masters we must also reverence our own sentiments. "Strong sense, united to delicate sentiment, improved by practice, perfected by comparison, and cleared of all prejudice, can alone entitle critics to be judges of the fine arts," said Hume. This is sound counsel.

The Power of Music.

The fine arts, and especially music, enrich our lives, tending to revitalize our religion, morals, citizenship, and education. "Music appeals at once to nearly all mankind, regardless of its degree of civilization, and has done from the beginnings of existence. Music is versatile, for it adapts itself to almost every human experience—love, hate, joy, sorrow, virtue, and vice. Music is powerful, for it can shake these very passions and turn our hate to love, our sorrow to joy, our vice to virtue. Music is untranslatable, inexplicable, in spite of the greatest writings of the greatest men. Music appeals to the physical, emotional, and intellectual—the three dimensions of man's human existence." Thus, the claim of music to a high place among the fine arts, and to an exalted (but attainable) plane in the circumstance of modern life.

NOTE ON CHAPTER X

The word *style* is capable of so many interpretations that to have gone into the subject fully would have meant an additional chapter to this book. This would have been justified had the matter come within the scope of the title *Intelligent Listening to Music*; as it is of secondary importance for the average practical listener, a skeleton survey (in note form) must suffice.

Throughout this book two meanings only have been implied, namely, personal style—in which we think of the mode adopted by the craftsman for the presentation of his ideas, and historic style—that is, the chronological period to which a work belongs.

There are, however, at least six different conceptions of style, viz.—

1. *Historic Style.* Classification into "schools." (*a*) Polyphonic. (*b*) Transitional (Bach and Handel). (*c*) Classic. (*d*) Post-classic, or early Romantic (Wagner, Schumann, Brahms). (*e*) Impressionist and Modern (Debussy, Franck). (*f*) Ultra-modern (Schönberg). (*h*) Futurist (?)

2. *Personal Style.* The expression of some individual quality. Haydn's humour. Schubert's tenderness. Mendelssohn's sentimentality. Brahms's rugged truth.

3. *Purposeful Style.* Expression directed into one particular channel. Palestrina—the Church. Scarlatti—the harpsichord. Bach—"human uplift." Handel—the Chorus. Haydn—instrumental individuality. Beethoven—"classic expression." Schubert—the Song. Schumann—the Lyric. Wagner—"emotional vividness." Brahms—"abstract thought."

4. *Categorical Style.* Classification according to type of composition. Church music. Dramatic music (*a*) of the stage (Opera), (*b*) by suggestion (Programme Music). Choral music. Chamber music. Music for solo instruments. Orchestral music.

5. *Technical Style.* Classification of music according to predominant detail. Bach—"living" counterpoint. Schubert—lovely melody. Chopin—pianoforte technique. Liszt—instrumental technique. Wagner—"fluid" harmony. Strauss—orchestral technique.

6. *Expansive Style.* Classification into (*a*) Thematic development—Beethoven, and (*b*) Emotional development—Chopin, Grieg.

The above classifications are purely arbitrary, and the unwary are likely to be misled rather than guided by them. A listener may find they jog his memory, but he should always regard the growth of music as organic, and not a chronological succession of movements.

CODA

"Books on musical appreciation are valuable aids, but a true understanding of the art seldom develops until we have cultivated attentive and well-directed listening over a long period of time."

These words appear in the Introduction at the other end of the book. They were intended to emphasize that the enjoyment of music comes with little theory and much practice: that reading, rather than being a substitute for listening, is merely an aid to it. Nevertheless, listening must be well-directed, a possible *modus operandi* having been suggested in the previous chapters. After a little experience, a beginner discovers that his interest in music accumulates, and that he gives more attention to its details. Progress may be tested by undergoing self-examination every now and then. It is for the benefit of those listeners who wish to watch their own development that the following exercise is offered, and it is hoped that similar tests may suggest themselves.

The test-piece must be known for the present by the number of the gramophone record on which it appears, namely, Columbia 9518 (Price 4s.). This has been chosen because both music and composer are not too well known. The test becomes more pointed if the label on the record is not seen. For this reason, it might be well to find a friend to obtain the record and manipulate the gramophone. Begin by listening in a passive way to the piece played straight through once or twice. Then read through the questions, and listen (with them at hand) as often as necessary, in some cases *while writing down answers*. This may take time—perhaps a dozen hearings may prove insufficient.

THE QUESTIONS

1. To what period of musical history do you think the music belongs? At all events, give a rough estimate by suggesting "pre-classical," "classical," or "post-classical."

2. What is the style of writing? Is it religious music, folk music, contrapuntal (horizontal) music, abstract music, romantic music, programme music, impressionist music, or real music?

3. If the music suggests anything concrete, can you give a title to the piece?

4. Make a list of adjectives suitably describing the piece.

5. Has the composition shape or form? If so, give the musical formula adopted by the composer.

6. Do the phrase lengths appear to be usual or unusual?

7. What time-signature would fit the music?

8. What instruments do you think constitute

(*a*) The solo parts; and (*b*) The accompaniment?

9. Is the accompaniment fairly constant, i.e. are the chords repeated throughout by the same instruments?

10. Do you hear other than "legitimate" orchestral instruments? Are "effects" used, for instance?

11. Does any instrument appear to play "out of tune," or in a key foreign to that of the rest of the piece?

12. Would you say the orchestration is complex and heavy, or simple and "thin"; and are the harmonies and melodies diatonic (in a fixed scale), or chromatic?

13. In what way is the conclusion particularly interesting?

14. Do you regard this as a serious composition?

15. What other pieces are written in a similar style?

16. Is there a clue to the composer, his nationality, or his "school"?

17. Have you any further observations to make on the work?

THE ANSWERS

Until fairly recently, the piece of music chosen for this test had not been played by any orchestra in this country, for the reason that it is not the work of a British composer, nor was it printed and published in the usual way until 1932, even although it was composed before the War. The first gramophone record (Columbia 9518) appeared in 1929, although the recording was carried out in America. More recently a dance band version of the piece has been issued by Columbia (DX 273), but with altered (and inferior) orchestration. Still later recordings are H.M.V. B 8488, Col. DB 1741, and Decca K754

The test-piece is a fragment from a ballet by Gabriel Pierné called *Cydalise and the Satyr.* The ballet, which was composed in 1913, fantastically blends myth and romance, and introduces the fabled satyr of Greek lore into the surroundings of the French Court of the seventeenth century. The fragment itself is a march of spirited character played as an accompaniment to the entrance of an old faun, tutor in the art of playing the Pandean pipes, together with his class of young pupils. Pierné's original title may be translated as "The Steps of the Little Fauns," but it will be noticed that the record label gives it as "The *Entrance* of the Little Fauns." For those who have not seen the ballet, perhaps the Columbia title is the more descriptive.

1. The answer to this question is very easy. The originality and daring displayed by the composer is typically modern, so that the correct answer is that it is post-classical, or (more accurately) contemporary music.

2. The least musical of listeners would hardly imagine the work to be of a religious or a folk-dance nature. It is not contrapuntal, for the melody is accompanied by chords throughout, and the touch of the flippant and

the picturesque preclude it from being classed as abstract music. It might possibly be romantic, though certainly not impressionistic. Neither does it seem to express an individual point of view. It seems to portray *something*, though exactly *what* is difficult to guess. One is led to believe it to be characteristic of some event or thing.

3. The answer to Question 2 suggests that a title is necessary. The shrill whistle heard a number of times throughout the piece might conceivably be the blast of an engine entering a tunnel, and the underlying accompaniment the rhythmic career of the train over the sleepers, but the speed is too precise, and too slow—even for a goods train! The pace is also too sluggish for an Oriental ceremony. But for the shrill whistles, one might be led to suggest a dance of elephants. Undoubtedly, it is a march of some sort, but it is certainly a queer one.

4. The simplest adjective we can apply is *weird*: or we might go a little further and call it *grotesque*. Words like *monotonous*, *ominous*, *persistent*, and *gruesome* might possibly be used. *March-like* and *funereal* aptly describe the style of the music.

5. This question should have given no trouble to listeners able to identify easy patterns. The piece is in very definite form, since two contrasting sections are twice repeated, after which comes a postscript. Technically, the piece is in Binary Form, thus—

A – *B* – *A* – *B* – Coda

6. The phrase lengths are quite out of the ordinary. The number of beats in the accompaniment up to the point where the first solo instrument enters is unusual. The melodic phrases are odd and irregular—seven beats in the first section, and eight beats in the latter section.

The shrill whistle motif also contains seven beats. Rarely do we find successions of phrases as irregular as these.

7. It is not easy to supply the piece with a suitable time-signature. At first 2/4 seems to fit, but later on the accent becomes misplaced without warning. Either the time is 2/4 throughout with occasional syncopation, or the signature is *changed* at intervals.

8. (*a*) Some of the solo instruments are easy to identify. The opening melody (following the introductory piccolo motif) is given to a muted trumpet, after which the piccolo repeats its theme. The shrill passages are the work of *two* piccolos, the unusual shrillness on the gramophone record being probably due to faulty reproduction, and to the fact that in America metal piccolos are used. Halfway through there is the slightest indication that an oboe joins the trumpet. The solo instruments, therefore, are two piccolos, muted trumpet, and an oboe.

(*b*) The subdued accompaniment, which is best heard at the beginning of the piece, varies occasionally, but not to a great extent. Intense listening shows that it increases in volume and instrumentation as the piece proceeds. There is an unmistakable side-drum tap with a crisp, rattling tone which suggests that it is "snared," i.e. strings of catgut are stretched across the lower head of the drum. On the second and fourth notes (quavers) in each bar there is evidence of a tambourine. At intervals a deeper boom indicates the presence of the bass drum. String tone is also there, low in pitch, muted, and occasionally plucked, and at times brass tone joins in. 'Cellos, double basses, horns, and trombones are therefore fairly easily heard, but it will require a keen ear and reproduction on a first-class gramophone to detect violins and violas playing *col legno*, i.e. the wooden part of the bow striking

the strings—and the addition of two clarinets and a bassoon halfway through and on to the end.

9. The above answer shows that the accompaniment is *not* constant.

10. Except for the shrill passages, which are played by piccolos, and the uncanny sounds emitted by the violins and violas *col legno*, the sounds are genuinely orchestral.

11. If any instruments are "out of tune" they are the piccolos. Their weird themes must not be lightly dismissed, however. They play a definite scale (actually a Greek mode), which is different from the rest of the piece.

12. Although the music is eerie, it is not complex. A melodic line moves over a straightforward chordal accompaniment, and, since there is a mixture of modes (polytonality), the scoring must be described as chromatic.

13. The Coda is particularly interesting. It consists of (*a*) the last half of the final phrase "B" twice repeated, (*b*) this half-phrase again halved and twice repeated, and (*c*) the final note of (*b*) twice repeated—altogether a very skilful "tailing off" of the main pattern.

14. By now it will be realized that the work is serious, even although the subject is fantastical.

15. Similar works are: Parts of Goossens's *Kaleidoscope*, and Grovlez's *A Child's Garden*. Debussy's *Afternoon of a Faun* is similar in subject-matter, though not in treatment.

16. Unless the music of Pierné is familiar, very familiar in fact, this question encourages mere guesswork. Gabriel Pierné was born at Metz in 1863, and he studied in Paris, won the Prix de Rome in 1882, and from 1910 to 1937 (when he died) was conductor of the famous Concerts Colonne. He is little known by the average British music-lover. A handful of his works is broadcast from time to

time, but with insufficient frequency to make them or their author prominent. His larger works are for the stage, being operas, ballets, pantomimes, etc., but there are also some orchestral, pianoforte, and chamber compositions. In England he is chiefly known by his pianoforte collection *Album for My Little Friends*, which contains the popular *March of the Little Leaden Soldiers*. This, and *Serenade*, and *Serenade to Columbine* might possibly give the clue to the composer of the test-piece, especially as they are very similar in style and treatment. Pierné, in common with other contemporary French composers, is a clever orchestrator, for he brings out the individuality of each instrument he uses in charming fashion. He also specially favours the wood-wind group, and has the gift of producing piquant effects by introducing exquisite and highly coloured modulations.

17. *The Entrance of the Little Fauns* aroused considerable curiosity in the United States. Now that it is being heard more frequently in this country it may have the same effect. The fragment is interesting musically, and a source of fascination to those who possess the gramophone recording. But it is too slight to be of any great consequence. It has been given unusual attention in this final chapter, not because of its merits, good or bad, but because it is comparatively unknown, and therefore suits the purposes of this test admirably. It is a typical example of the work of the contemporary French School.

APPENDIX

COMPLETE LIST OF MUSICAL WORKS MENTIONED IN THIS BOOK, TOGETHER WITH AVAILABLE GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

For the benefit of students, the most recent—and therefore, in the great majority of cases, the most faithful—recordings have been selected. For many reasons, records from foreign catalogues are omitted. The following abbreviations should be noted—

Col. . . .	Columbia
Dec. . . .	Decca, and Decca-Polydor
H.M.V. . .	His Master's Voice
I.E.S.. . .	International Educational Society (published by Columbia)
Parl. . . .	Parlophone

Records marked with an asterisk * are either selections, or works subjected to severe "cuts." The nature of the recording, instrumental or vocal, is stated, but there are a few instances where this is not in accordance with the setting of the original composition. The following abbreviations are used—

Harps. . .	Harpsichord
O. . . .	Orchestral
Org. . . .	Organ
Pft. . . .	Pianoforte
Qu. . . .	String Quartet
V. . . .	Vocal
Vn. . . .	Violin

It is suggested that students enter up into this list numbers of records of the works hitherto unrecorded, if and when they appear.

ARENSKY	Basso Ostinato	—	Pft.
BACH, J. S.	Capriccio	—	Pft.
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NOTE.—The date of birth of certain composers (particularly those of the 16th century) is only approximate.

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